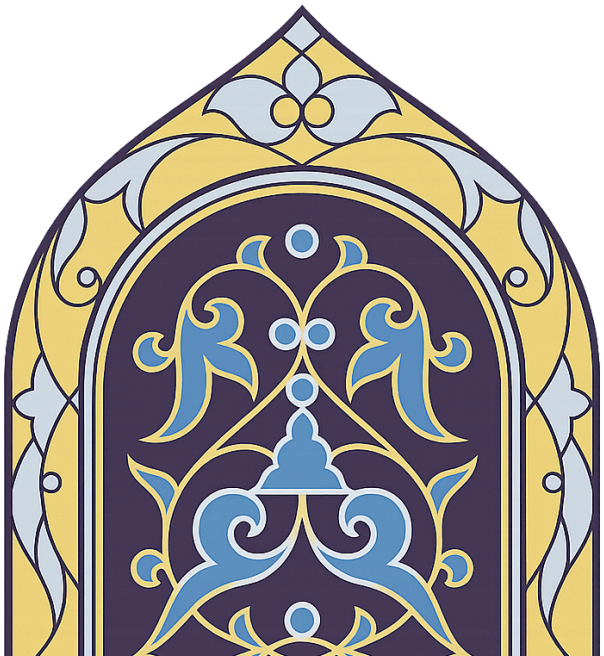
DAR AL-ATHAAR
PUBLICATIONS

بيان عقيدة السلف

CLARIFICATION OF
The Creed of Salaf



By:
Ahmed bin Nasir Al-Tayyar

Translation by:
Abu Khuzaymah al-Hanbali

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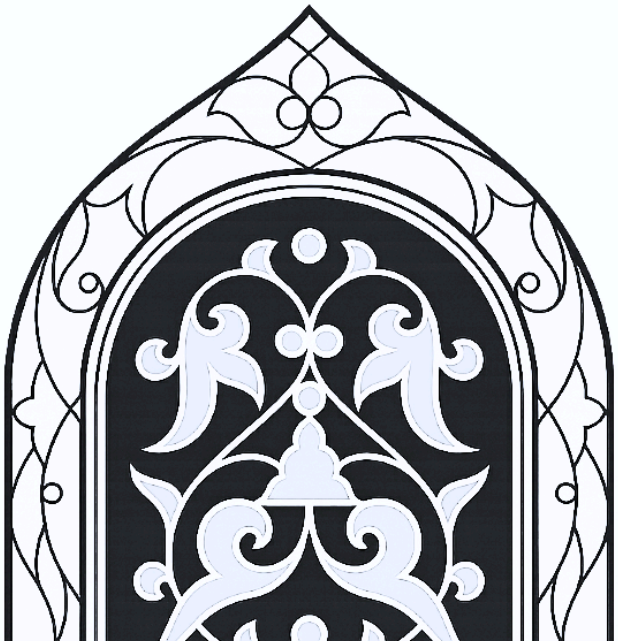

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Translator's note:

بِسْمِ ٱللَّهِ ٱلرَّحْمَٰنِ ٱلرَّحِيمِ

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy.

All praise is due to Allah, and may peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of Allah, his family, his companions, and all those who follow them in truth.

This brief work titled by the translator, Bayān ʿAqīdat al-Salaf (Clarification of the Creed of the Salaf) is a translation of the chapter on ʿAqīdah (creed) from the book Ḥayāt al-Salaf bayna al-Qawl wa-al-ʿAmal (The Life of the Salaf Between Speech and Action) by Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Nāṣir al-Ṭayyār, may Allah preserve him.

The goal of this translation is to present the pure creed of the righteous predecessors (al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ) to English-speaking Muslims, particularly students of knowledge who seek to be firmly grounded in the way of the early generations, in both belief and practice.

For the benefit of readers, the original Arabic text has been retained alongside the English translation. This allows for precise reference, reflection on the original expressions, and greater engagement with the language of the Islamic tradition.

Artificial intelligence tools were used at the drafting stage to assist in rendering the meanings clearly, but the work was carefully reviewed, refined, and edited manually to ensure fidelity to the author's words and alignment with the terminology of the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah. Any errors or misunderstandings are mine alone, and I ask Allah for His forgiveness and correction.

Sound creed is the foundation upon which all righteous action is built. Without correct belief, actions are invalid, and guidance is lost. The early generations of this Ummah were unwavering in their commitment to the creed of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, free from distortion, innovation, and speculative theology. As Imām Mālik (may Allah have mercy on him) said, "The latter part of this Ummah will not be rectified except by what rectified its first part."

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "The best of generations is my generation, then those who follow them, then those who follow them." Thus, it is from the mercy of Allah that He has preserved the pure ʿAqīdah through the transmission and practice of the Salaf. It is upon us to take our creed from them—untainted by innovation, speculation, or philosophy—and to

cling to their understanding with firmness. It is the only path to safety. Their understanding was built upon revelation, clarity, and sincerity, and their way remains the straight path for those who seek Allah and the Last Day.

I ask Allah to make this translation a source of benefit, sincerity, and reward, a means of clarity for those searching for the truth and steadfastness for those already upon it.

May Allah send peace and blessings upon our Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions. All praise is due to Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

Translator,

Abū Khuzaymah al-Hanbalī

Introduction:

In the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Bestower of Mercy

All praise is due to Allah, who perfected the religion and completed His favor upon the Ummah, and made the path of salvation clear through His Book and the guidance of His Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ. Peace and blessings be upon him, his family, his noble companions, and all those who follow them in righteousness until the Day of Judgment.

To proceed:

This book, titled Bayān ʿAqīdat al-Salaf (Clarification of the Creed of the Salaf), is a summarized and beneficial compilation drawn from the work of the noble scholar Shaykh Aḥmad ibn Nāṣir al-Ṭayyār, may Allah preserve him, from his book Ḥayāt al-Salaf bayna al-Qawl wa-al-ʿAmal.

It presents, in approximately sixty pages, a structured and referenced overview of the core principles of Islamic creed (ʿAqīdah), purely upon the methodology of the Salaf al-Ṣāliḥ (the righteous predecessors). It does not engage in argumentation or speculative theology, nor does it contain the words of the compiler except in brief footnotes. Rather, it is a preservation and transmission of the sayings of the early generations and those who inherited their legacy.

Each topic is supported by direct quotes from the likes of the Companions, the Tābiʿīn, and the great Imāms of guidance, such as Mālik, al-Awzāʿī, Aḥmad, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn al-Qayyim, and others. These statements are fully sourced with references directly beneath them, with ḥadīth citations and additional scholarly notes placed in the footnotes for further context and benefit.

The book covers key aspects of Islamic ʿAqīdah (creed), including the authority of the Sunnah and the dangers of rejecting it, the belief that the Qur'an is the uncreated speech of Allah, and the comprehensive definition of Īmān as belief, speech, and action that increases and decreases. It affirms belief in Divine Decree (al-Qadr), Allah's Highness and His rising over the Throne (al-Istiwā'), and the correct approach to His Names and Attributes without distortion or denial. The book also outlines the principles of declaring disbelief (Takfīr), innovation (Tabdīʿ), and sinfulness (Tafsīq), emphasizes the noble status of the Companions, the meaning and conditions of the Shahādah, the foundations of loyalty and disavowal for Allah's sake (al-Walāʾ wa-al-Barāʾ), the prohibition of swearing by other than Allah, and concludes with a brief summary of the fundamentals of the Sunnah.In an age where many

voices and ideologies compete to redefine Islam in the light of desires, reason, or modernity, it becomes incumbent upon the seeker of truth to return to the sources of guidance: the Book of Allah, the authentic Sunnah, and the understanding of the early generations, those whom the Prophet ﷺ praised as the best of this Ummah.

This book, by the grace of Allah, is a brief yet powerful reminder of that original path. It is suitable for the beginner and beneficial for the advanced student, a reference in clarity, authenticity, and firm grounding upon the creed of the earliest generations.

We ask Allah to make this work sincerely for His sake, a means of benefit for the Ummah, and a reminder of the weight and virtue of sound belief.

Status of the Sunnah and the Refutation of those who take the Qur'an and reject the Sunnah:

• From ʿ**Alī** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 40 AH), he said:

إذا حدثتم عن رسول الله ﷺ فظنوا به الذي هو أهدى، والذي هو أتقى.

"If you are told something from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, then assume the best, that which is more rightly guided and more God-fearing."

[Musnad al-Dārimī: 612]

• ʿAlqamah reported: **Abdullāh ibn Masʿūd** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 32 AH) said:

لعن الله تعالى الواشمات والمستوشمات والمتفلّجات للحسن والمغيّرات خلق الله. فبلغ ذلك امرأة من بني أسد يقال لها: أم يعقوب، كانت تقرأ القرآن، فأتته، فقالت: ما حديث ما بلغني عنك؟ أنّك لعنت الواشمات والمستوشمات والمتفلجات للحسن والمغيّرات خلق الله ؟ فقال عبد الله: وما لي لا ألعن من لعن رسولُ الله ﷺ وهو في كتاب الله؟ فقالت: لقد قرأت ما بين لوحَي المصحف، فما وجدت هذا؟ فقال عبد الله : لئن كنت قرأته لقد وجدته، ثم قال: (وَمَا آتَاكُمُ الرَّسُولُ فَخُذُوهُ وَمَا نَهَاكُمْ عَنْهُ فَانْتَهُوا) [الحشر: من الآية ٧]. قَالَتْ بَلَى. قَالَ فَإِنَّهُ قَدْ نَهَى عَنْهُ. قَالَتْ فَإِنِّي أَرَى أَهْلَكَ يَفْعَلُونَهُ. قَالَ فَاذْهَبِي فَانْظُرِي. فَذَهَبَتْ فَنَظَرَتْ فَلَمْ تَرَ مِنْ حَاجَتِهَا شَيْئًا، فَقَالَ لَوْ كَانَتْ كَذَلِكَ مَا جَامَعْتُها

"May Allah curse the women who practice tattooing and those who get tattooed, those who file their teeth for beauty, and those who change the creation of Allah ﷻ." This reached a woman from the tribe of Banū Asad named Umm Yaʿqūb, who used to recite the Qur'an. She came to him and said: "What is this report that has reached me from you, that you cursed the women who tattoo, get tattooed, file their teeth for beauty, and change the creation of Allah ﷻ?" ʿAbdullāh replied: "Why should I not curse those whom the Messenger of Allah ﷺ cursed, and it is in the Book of Allah ﷻ?" She said: "I have read the entire Muṣḥaf between its covers, and I did not find this in it." ʿAbdullāh (may Allah be pleased with him) said: "If you truly read it, then you certainly found it."

Then he recited: *{And whatever the Messenger gives you, take it; and whatever he forbids you, abstain from it.} [Al-Ḥashr: 7]*

She replied, "Yes, I did," He said, "Verily, Allah's Messenger ﷺ forbade such things." "She said, "But I see your wife doing these things?" He said, "Go and watch her." She went

and watched her but could not see anything in support of her statement. On that he said, "If my wife was as you thought, I would not keep her in my company."

[Sahih Al-Bukhari 4886, Sahih Muslim 2125]

• **Ḥassān ibn ʿAṭiyyah** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 130 AH) said:

كان جبريل ينزل على النبي بالسنة، كما ينزل عليه بالقرآن

"Jibrīl (Gabriel) used to descend upon the Prophet ﷺ with the Sunnah just as he would descend upon him with the Qur'an."

[Musnad al-Dārimī: 608]

• From **Saʿīd ibn Jubayr** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 94 AH):

أَنَّهُ حَدَّثَ يَوْمًا بِحَدِيثٍ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ مِنْ أَهْلِ مَكَّةَ : فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ مَا يُخَالِفُ هَذَا، فَغَضِبَ سَعِيدٌ غَضَبًا شَدِيدًا، أَلَا أَرَاكَ تُعَارِضُ كِتَابَ اللهِ بِحَدِيثِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ، كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ أَعْلَمَ بِكِتَابِ اللهِ مِنْكَ

He once narrated a ḥadīth from the Prophet ﷺ, and a man from the people of Makkah said: "There is something in the Book of Allah that contradicts this." Saʿīd became extremely angry and said: "Do you oppose the Book of Allah with a ḥadīth of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ? The Messenger of Allah ﷺ knew the Book of Allah better than you!"

[Musnad al-Dārimī: 610]

• **Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Abbār** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 290 AH) said:

رَأَيْتُ بِالْأَهْوَازِ رَجُلًا قَدْ حَفَّ شَارِبَهُ، وَأَظُنُّهُ: قَدِ اشْتَرَى كُتُبًا وَتَعَيَّنَ لِلْفُتْيَا، فَذَكَرُوا أَصْحَابَ الْحَدِيثِ، فَقَالَ: لَيْسُوا بِشَيْءٍ، وَلَيْسَ يَسْوُونَ شَيْئًا، فَقُلْتُ لَهُ: أَنْتَ لَا تُحْسِنُ تُصَلِّي، قَالَ : أَنَا ؟ قُلْتُ : نَعَمْ، قُلْتُ: إِيشَ تَحْفَظُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِذَا افْتَحْتَ الصَّلَاةَ وَرَفَعْتَ يَدَيْكَ؟ فَسَكَتَ، فَقُلْتُ: وأيشْ تَحْفَظُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِذَا وَضَعْتَ يَدَيْكَ عَلَى رُكْبَتَيْكَ ؟ فَسَكَتَ ، قُلْتُ: إِيشُ تَحْفَظُ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ إِذَا سَجَدْتَ ؟ فَسَكَتَ ، قُلْتُ : مَا لَكَ لا تَكَلَّم؟ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكَ إِنَّكَ لَا تُحْسِنُ تُصَلِّي ؟ أَنْتَ إِنَّمَا قِيلَ لَكَ : تُصَلَّى الْغَدَاةُ رَكْعَتَيْنِ، وَالظُّهْرُ أَرْبَعًا، فَالْزَمْ ذَا خَيْرٌ لَكَ مِنْ أَنْ تَذْكُرَ أَصْحَابَ الْحَدِيثِ، فَلَسْتَ بِشَيْءٍ وَلَا تُحْسِنُ شَيْئًا

"I saw in al-Ahwāz a man who had trimmed his moustache, and I assumed he had bought some books and appointed himself as a muftī (jurist). They mentioned the people of ḥadīth in his presence, and he said: 'They are nothing. They are worthless.' So I said to him: 'You

don't even know how to pray properly.' He replied: 'Me?' I said: 'Yes. What do you know from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when you begin the prayer and raise your hands?' He was silent. I continued: 'What do you know from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when you place your hands on your knees [in bowing]?' He was silent again. I asked: 'What do you know from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ when you prostrate?'
He remained silent. So I said: 'Why don't you speak? Didn't I tell you that you don't know how to pray properly? You were merely told: the morning prayer is two rakʿahs, and ẓuhr is four, so stick to that, it is better for you than speaking about the people of ḥadīth. You are nothing and you don't know anything.'"

[Tahdhīb al-Siyar, 3/1101]

• **Muḥammad ibn Ismāʿīl al-Tirmidhī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 280 AH) said:

كنت أنا وأحمد بن الحسن الترمذي عند إمام الدين أبي عبد الله أحمد بن حنبل: فقال له أحمد بن الحسن: يا أبا عبد الله، ذكروا لابن أبي قُتيلة بمكة أصحاب الحديث فقال: أصحاب الحديث قوم سوء، فقام أحمد بن حنبل وهو ينفض ثوبه ويقول: زنديق! زنديق! زنديق! حتى دخل بيته

"I was with Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan al-Tirmidhī in the presence of the Imam of the religion, Abū ʿAbdillāh Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal. Aḥmad ibn al-Ḥasan said to him: 'O Abū ʿAbdillāh, it was mentioned to Ibn Abī Qutaylah in Makkah that there are people known as Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth (people of hadith), and he said: "The people of hadith are an evil group." Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal stood up, shaking off his garment, and said: "Zindīq! Zindīq! Zindīq!"[1] (Heretic! Heretic! Heretic!) until he entered his house."

[ʿAqīdat al-Salaf wa Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, pp. 300–303]

[1] Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "As for the zindīq (heretic) whose repentance the jurists discussed accepting outwardly, what they meant by that is: the hypocrite (munāfiq) who outwardly displays Islam but inwardly conceals disbelief, even if, along with that, he performs prayer, fasts, makes pilgrimage, and recites the Qur'an. Whether in his heart he is a Jew, a Christian, a polytheist, or an idol-worshipper; whether he denies the Creator, prophethood altogether, or just the prophethood of our Prophet, such a person is a zindīq, and he is a hypocrite (munāfiq)." [Bughiyat al-Murtād, p. 338].
Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said in Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (4/96): "So reflect on this just judgment, so that it becomes clear to you that those who criticize the People of Hadith and turn away from their path are, without a doubt, ignorant, heretical hypocrites. And for this reason, when it reached Imām Aḥmad about Ibn Abī Qutaylah, that he had mentioned the People of Hadith in Makkah and said: 'They are an evil group', Imām Aḥmad stood up, shaking off his garment and saying: 'Zindīq! Zindīq! Zindīq!' Then he went into his house. For he (Imām Aḥmad) understood his (Ibn Abī Qutaylah's) true intent."

• Abū ʿUthmān al-Ṣābūnī (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

سَمِعْتُ الشَّيْخَ أَبَا بَكْرٍ أَحْمَدَ بنَ إِسْحَاقَ ابنِ أَيُّوبَ الفَقِيهَ الصَّبْغِيَّ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ (ت: (٣٤٢) ، وَهُوَ يُنَاظِرُ رَجُلًا، فَقَالَ الشَّيْخُ: حَدَّثَنَا فُلانٌ، فَقَالَ لَهُ الرَّجُلُ : دَعْنَا مِنْ حَدَّثَنَا إِلَى مَتَى حَدَّثَنَا؟ فَقَالَ الشَّيْخُ لَهُ: قُمْ يَا كَافِرُ، فَلا يَحِلُّ لَكَ أَنْ تَدْخُلَ دَارِي بَعْدَ هَذَا ! ثُمَّ الْتَفَتَ إِلَيْنَا، فَقَالَ: مَا قُلْتُ لأَحَدٍ قَطُّ لا تَدْخُلْ دَارِي إِلا هَذَا».

I heard **Shaykh Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn Isḥāq ibn Ayyūb al-Faqīh al-Ṣabghī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 342 AH) debating with a man. The Shaykh said: "So-and-so narrated to us…" The man replied: "Leave this 'he narrated to us', how long will you keep saying 'he narrated to us'?" So the Shaykh said to him: "Stand up, O disbeliever![2] It is not permissible for you to enter my house after this!" Then he turned to us and said: "I have never said to anyone before: 'Do not enter my house' except to this man."[3]

[ʿAqīdat al-Salaf wa Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, pp. 300–301]

• From Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 241 AH):

عندما سُئل عَنِ الحديث الذي روي "إن السنة قاضية عَلَى الكتاب" فقال : ما أجسُرُ عَلَى هذا أن أقوله، ولكن السنة تُفَسِّر الكتاب وتُبيّنه.

He was asked about a hadith that says: "Indeed, the Sunnah is the judge over the Book (the Qur'an)."[4] He replied: "I do not dare to say such a thing. Rather, the Sunnah explains and clarifies the Book."

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[2] Declaring a specific individual (by name) to be a disbeliever is a grave matter, one that only the senior, well-grounded scholars among the true scholars of religion should speak about, and only after the establishment of proof, the fulfillment of conditions, and the absence of obstacles. The conditions are: knowledge, intent, and free choice. So when statements of the scholars of the Salaf refer to declaring a specific person a disbeliever, they are understood in light of these conditions, meaning: his situation was known, proof was established against him, and Allah knows best.

[3] Al-Ājurrī, may Allah have mercy on him, said—after mentioning the view of those who say: "We only accept what is in the Book of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and that it is not obligatory to follow what is authentically reported from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ"—he said: All the obligations that Allah has prescribed in His Book—none of their rulings are known except through the Sunnah of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. This is the position of the scholars of the Muslims. Whoever says otherwise has left the religion of Islam and entered the religion of the heretics. (*Al-Sharīʿah*, p. 59)
Al-Barbahārī, may Allah have mercy on him, said: If you hear a man criticizing the reports (the hadith), or rejecting them, or seeking something other than them, then suspect him regarding his Islam, and do not doubt that he is a follower of desires and an innovator. (*Sharḥ al-Sunnah*, p. 107).

[4] It is narrated from Yahya ibn Abi Kathir (may Allah have mercy on him) in Musnad al-Dārimī (607), Ibn Battah (219), al-Marwazī in al-Sunnah (102).

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/192]

• And He (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

من رد حديث رسول الله ﷺ فهو على شفا هلكة.

"Whoever rejects a hadith of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ is on the verge of destruction."

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 3/28]

Stance of Salaf on those who say that The Qur'an is created:

• It was said to **Ja'far ibn Muḥammad al-Ṣādiq** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 148 AH):

الْقُرْآنُ: خَالِقٌ، أَوْ مَخْلُوقٌ ؟ قَالَ: «لَيْسَ بِخَالِقٍ ، وَلَا مَخْلُوقٍ، وَلَكِنَّهُ كَلَامُ اللهِ».

"Is the Qur'an a creator or a created thing?" He replied: "It is neither a creator nor a created thing, but it is the speech of Allah."

[Al-Sharīʿah, p. 85]

• **Sufyān al-Thawrī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 161 AH) said:

مَنْ زَعَمَ أَنَّ: {قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ}مَخْلُوقٌ ، فَقَدْ كَفَرَ بِاللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ.

"Whoever claims that *{Say: He is Allah, the One} [Surah al-Ikhlāṣ, 112:1]* is created, has disbelieved in Allah the Almighty"[5]

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah, 2/384]

• **ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 198 AH) said:

مَنْ قَالَ: القَرْآنُ مَخْلُوقٌ، فَلَا تُصَلِّ خَلْفَهُ، وَلَا تَمْشِ مَعَهُ فِي طَرِيقٍ، وَلَا تُنَاكِحْهُ .

"Whoever says: 'The Qur'an is created,' then do not pray behind him, do not walk with him on the same path, and do not marry him [your daughter]."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah, 3/113]

• **Manṣūr ibn ʿAmmār ibn Kathīr Abū al-Sarī al-Sulamī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. around 200 AH) said:

كَتَبَ إِلَيَّ بِشْرُ المَرِيسِيُّ (ت: ٢١٨): أَعْلِمْنِي مَا قَوْلُكُمْ فِي القُرْآنِ مَخْلُوقٌ هُوَ أَوْ غَيْرُ مَخْلُوقٍ؟ فَكَتَبْتُ إِلَيْهِ: بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ، أَمَّا بَعْدُ: عَافَانَا اللَّهُ وَإِيَّاكَ مِنْ كُلِّ فِتْنَةٍ، فَإِنْ يَفْعَلْ فَأَعْظِمْ بِهَا نِعْمَةً، وَإِنْ لَمْ يَفْعَلْ فَهُوَ الهَلَكَةُ. كَتَبْتَ إِلَيَّ: أَنْ أُعْلِمَكَ القُرْآنُ مَخْلُوقٌ أَوْ غَيْرُ مَخْلُوقٍ. فَاعْلَمْ أَنَّ الكَلَامَ فِي القُرْآنَ بِدْعَةٌ، يَشْتَرِكُ فِيهَا السَّائِلُ وَالمُجِيبُ، فَتَعَاطَى السَّائِلُ مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ

[5] A similar statement was said by Yahya ibn Sa'id Al-Qattan (d. 198 AH) [Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah, 3/109].

بِتَكَلُّفٍ، وَالمُجِيبُ مَا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ، وَاللَّهُ تَعَالَى الخَالِقُ، وَمَا دُونَ اللَّهِ مَخْلُوقٌ، وَالقُرْآنُ كَلَامُ اللَّهِ غَيْرُ مَخْلُوقٍ، فَانْتَهِ بِنَفْسِكَ وَبِالْمُخْتَلِفِينَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ إِلَى أَسْمَائِهِ الَّتِي سَمَّاهُ اللَّهُ بِهَا تَكُنْ مِنَ المُهْتَدِينَ، وَلَا تَبْتَدِعْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ قَلْبِكَ اسْمًا فَتَكُونَ مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ، {وَذَرُوا الَّذِينَ يُلْحِدُونَ فِي أَسْمَائِهِ، سَيُجْزَوْنَ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ} [الأعراف:١٨٠]، جَعَلَنَا اللَّهُ وَإِيَّاكُمْ مِمَّنْ يَخْشَوْنَهُ بِالغَيْبِ، وَهُمْ مِنَ السَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ.

"Bishr al-Marīsī[6] (d. 218 AH) wrote to me: 'Inform me of your view regarding the Qur'an, is it created or not created?' So I wrote back to him: In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. To proceed: May Allah protect us and you from every trial. If He does, then what a great blessing; if He does not, then it is destruction. You wrote asking me whether the Qur'an is created or not created. Know that speaking about the Qur'an (in this manner) is an innovation, both the one who asks and the one who answers share in it. The questioner has burdened himself with what is not his concern, and the responder with what is not his duty. Allah, Exalted is He, is the Creator, and everything besides Allah is created. The Qur'an is the speech of Allah and not created. So bring yourself and those who differ about the Qur'an back to the names by which Allah has called it, and you will be among the guided. Do not innovate for the Qur'an a name from your own heart, lest you be among the misguided. *{And leave those who deviate concerning His Names, they will be recompensed for what they used to do} [al-Aʿrāf: 180]*. May Allah make us and you among those who fear Him in the unseen and are fearful of the Hour."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah, 3/220]

• **Imam al-Shāfiʿī** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

إِنَّمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الخَلْقَ بِكُنْ، فَإِذَا كَانَتْ كُنْ مَخْلُوقَةٌ، فَكَأَنَّ مَخْلُوقًا خُلِقَ بِمَخْلُوقٍ.

"Allah created the creation with 'Be' (kun); so if 'Be' itself were created, it would be as if a created thing were created by another created thing."

[Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ, 9/111]

• He (may Allah have mercy on him) also said:

مَنْ قَالَ : القُرْآنُ مَخْلُوْقٌ، فَهُوَ كَافِرٌ.

"Whoever says: The Qur'an is created, then he is a Kafir"

[6] Misguided Mutakallim (person of Kalaam), Shaykh of the Mu'tazilah.

[Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ, 9/113]

• **Hārūn al-Farawī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 253 AH) said:

لَمْ أَسْمَعْ أَحَدًا مِنْ أَهْلِ العِلْمِ بِالمَدِينَةِ وَأَهْلِ السُّنَنِ إِلَّا وَهُمْ يُنْكِرُونَ عَلَى مَنْ قَالَ: القُرْآنُ مَخْلُوقٌ، وَيُكَفِّرُونَهُ. قَالَ: وَأَنَا أَقُولُ بِهَذِهِ السُّنَّةِ، ومَنْ وَقَفَ عَلَى القُرْآنِ بِالشَّلِّ، فَلَمْ يَقُلْ: غَيْرَ مَخْلُوقٍ، فَهُوَ كَمَنْ قَالَ : هُوَ مَخْلُوقٌ.

"I did not hear anyone from the people of knowledge in Madinah and the people of the Sunnah except that they would denounce those who said: 'The Qur'an is created,' and they would declare them disbelievers. He said: And I uphold this way. And whoever pauses regarding the Qur'an out of hesitation and does not say: 'It is uncreated,' then he is like the one who says: 'It is created'."

[Al-Sharīʿah: 162]

• It was said to **Imam Aḥmad** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 241 AH):

هؤلاء الذين يقولون القرآن مخلوق؟ قَالَ: كفار بالله العلي العظيم، قيل : فابن أبي دؤاد ؟ قَالَ: كافر بالله .

"What about those who say the Qur'an is created?" He replied: "They are disbelievers in Allah, the Most High, the Most Great." It was said: "And what about Ibn Abī Duʾād[7]?" He said: "He is a disbeliever in Allah."[8]

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah, 1/354]

• It was also said to him (may Allah have mercy on him) :

يا أبا عبدالله القرآن كلام الله غير مخلوق، منه بدأ ويعود ؟ قَالَ : منه بدأ علمه، وإليه يعود حكمه.

"O Abu Abdullah, the Qur'an is the Speech of Allah, uncreated. From Him it began and to Him it returns?" He said: "From Him began it's knowledge, and to Him returns its command."

[7] He was appointed as judge by al-Muʿtaṣim and al-Wāthiq bi-llāh, and he was outspoken in the doctrine of the Jahmiyyah, calling to the belief in the creation of the Qur'an. [Tārīkh al-Islām 5/758]

[8] He declared him a disbeliever (kāfir) because he uttered disbelief, namely, the statement that the Qur'an is created, and he called others to it, put people to trial over it, tortured, imprisoned, and killed because of it. The proof was established against him, but he did not accept it. For that reason, Imām Aḥmad declared him a disbeliever.

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/518]

• **Abū Zur‘ah al-Rāzī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 264 AH) said:

القرآن كلام الله غير مخلوق، والذي يقف فيه على الشك هو والذي يقول مخلوق شيء واحد.

كان أَحْمد بن حنبل يقول: تفرقت الجهمية على ثلاثة أصناف: صنف قالت القرآن مخلوق، وصنف وقفت، وصنف قَالَتْ لفظنا بالقرآن مخلوق.

“The Qur’an is the Speech of Allah, uncreated. The one who stops [to say it] due to doubt, He and the one who says it is created, they are one and the same.”

Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal used to say: “The Jahmiyyah are divided into three groups: One group said the Qur’an is created, another group remained undecided (withheld judgment), and a third group said: Our recitation (or utterance) of the Qur’an is created.”

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/59]

• **Qutaybah ibn Sa‘īd** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 340 AH) said:

من قَالَ: القرآن مخلوق فهو زنديق كافر بالله العلي العظيم، لا أُصَلِّي خَلفه، ولا أتبع جنازته، ولا أعوده.

“Whoever says that the Qur’an is created is a heretic (zindīq), a disbeliever in Allah, the Most High, the Most Great. I will not pray behind him, nor follow his funeral procession, nor visit him (if he falls ill).”

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/207]

• ʿ**Abd al-Malik ibn al-Mājishūn** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 212 AH) said:

سمعت من أدركت من علمائنا يقولون: القرآن كلام الله غير مخلوق.

“I heard those among our scholars whom I met saying: The Qur’an is the Speech of Allah, uncreated.”

[Tartīb al-Madārik 1/400]

Stance of the Salaf regarding the matter of faith (Īmān): That it is belief, speech, and actions. It increases and decreases[9]:

• Narrated by **Jundub ibn ʻAbdullah al-Bajalī** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 61 AH):

كُنَّا مَعَ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ وَنَحْنُ فِتْيَانٌ حَزَاوِرَةٌ ، فَتَعَلَّمْنَا الْإِيمَانَ قَبْلَ أَنْ نَتَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ، ثُمَّ تَعَلَّمْنَا الْقُرْآنَ فَازْدَدْنَا بِهِ إِيمَانًا.

"We were with the Prophet ﷺ while we were young men of strong age. We learned faith (Īmān) before we learned the Qur'an. Then we learned the Qur'an, and it increased us in faith."

[Sunan Ibn Mājah (61), authenticated by al-Albānī]

• Narrated from ʿ**Ubayd ibn** ʿ**Umayr al-Laythī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 74 AH), He said:

لَيْسَ الإِيمَانُ بِالتَّمَنِّي، وَلَكِنِ الإِيمَانُ : قَوْلٌ يُعْقَلُ، وَعَمَلٌ يُعْمَلُ.

"Faith (Īmān) is not by mere wishes, but rather, faith is: a statement that is understood and an action that is carried out."

[As-Sunnah by ʿAbdullāh ibn Imām Aḥmad, no. 675]

• Narrated from **Sufyān ibn** ʿ**Uyaynah** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 198 AH), He said on more than one occasion:

الإِيمَانُ: قَوْلُ وَعَمَلٌ، وَقَالَ: «فَأَخَذْنَاهُ مِمَّنْ قَبْلَنَا: قَوْلٌ وَعَمَلٌ، وَإِنَّهُ لَا يَكُونُ قَوْلٌ إِلَّا بِعَمَلٍ، قِيلَ لِابْنِ عُيَيْنَةَ : يَزِيدُ وَيَنْقُصُ ؟ قَالَ : فَأَيُّ شَيْءٍ إِذَا؟

"Faith is: speech and action." And he said: "We took this [understanding] from those who came before us: speech and action, and there is no speech without action." It was said to Ibn ʿUyaynah: "Does it increase and decrease?" He replied: "Then what else would it be?"

[Al-Sharīʿah, 123]

[9] It is incumbent upon a believer that he should take care of his Iman and learn Iman just as he learns the Qur'an.

• It was also said to him (may Allah have mercy on him):

"الْإِيمَانُ يَزِيدُ وَيَنْقُصُ؟" قَالَ: أَلَيْسَ تَقْرَءُونَ الْقُرْآنَ؟ {فَزَادَهُمْ إِيمَانًا} [آل عمران: ١٧٣] فِي غَيْرِ مَوْضِعٍ، قِيلَ: يَنْقُصُ؟ قَالَ: لَيْسَ شَيْءٌ يَزِيدُ إِلَّا وَهُوَ يَنْقُصُ.

"Does faith increase and decrease?" He said: "Do you not recite the Qur'an?, *'...and it increased them in faith' [Āl ʿImrān: 173]*, and in other places (as well)." He was asked: "Does it decrease?" He replied: "There is nothing that increases except that it also decreases."

[Al-Sharīʿah, 132]

• **Al-Awzāʿī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 157 AH) said:

كَانَ مَنْ مَضَى مِنْ سَلَفِنَا لَا يُفَرِّقُونَ بَيْنَ الإِيمَانِ وَالعَمَلِ، العَمَلُ مِنَ الإِيمَانِ، وَالإِيمَانُ مِنَ العَمَلِ.

"Those who passed from among our predecessors did not separate between faith (Īmān) and actions. Actions are part of faith, and faith is part of Actions."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah 2/291]

• It is also narrated from him (may Allah have mercy on him):

الرَّجُلِ يُسْأَلُ أَمُؤْمِنٌ أَنْتَ حَقًّا؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ المَسْأَلَةَ عَمَّا سُئِلَ مِنْ ذَلِكَ بِدْعَةٌ ، وَالشَّهَادَةُ عَلَيْهِ تَعَمُّق ، وَلَمْ نُكَلَّفْهُ فِي دِينِنَا، وَلَمْ يَشْرَعْهُ نَبِيُّنَا عَلَيْهِ أَفْضَلُ الصَّلَاةِ وَأَزْكَى السَّلَامِ ، لَيْسَ لِمَنْ يَسْأَلُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ فِيهِ إِمَامٌ. فَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ عَلَى السُّنَّةِ، وَقِفْ حَيْثُ وَقَفَ الْقَوْمُ، وَقُلْ بِمَا قَالُوا، وَكُفَّ عَمَّا كَفُوا عَنْهُ، وَاسْلُكْ سُبُلَ سَلَفِكَ الصَّالِحُ، فَإِنَّهُ يَسَعُكَ مَا وَسِعَهُمْ. وَلَوْ كَانَ هَذَا خَيْرًا مَا خُصِصْتُمْ بِهِ دُونَ أَسْلَافِكُمْ، فَإِنَّهُ لَمْ يَدَّخِرْ عَنْهُمْ خَيْرًا هُوَ لَكُمْ دُونَهُمْ لِفَضْلٍ عِنْدَكُمْ، وَهُمْ أَصْحَابُ نَبِيِّهِ مُحَمَّدٍ ﷺ الَّذِينَ اخْتَارَهُمْ لَهُ، وَبَعَثَهُ فِيهِمْ، وَوَصَفَهُمْ بِمَا وَصَفَهُمْ، فَقَالَ : تُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُولُ اللَّهِ وَالَّذِينَ مَعَهُ أَشِدَّاءُ عَلَى الْكُفَّارِ {رُحَمَاءُ بَيْنَهُمْ تَرَبَّهُمْ رُكَعًا سُجَّدًا يَبْتَغُونَ فَضْلًا مِّنَ اللَّهِ وَرِضْوَانًا} [الفتح: ٢٩].

About a man being asked: "Are you truly a believer?". He said: "This kind of questioning is an innovation (bidʿah), and passing judgment on someone in this way is excessiveness. We were not commanded this in our religion, nor was it legislated by our Prophet ﷺ. There is no Imām (scholars preceding them) among those who asked such questions. So, be patient upon the Sunnah, and stop where the people (the Salaf) stopped. Say what they said, and refrain from what they refrained from. Follow the path of your righteous predecessors, for what sufficed them is sufficient for you. Had this (questioning and delving) been something good, you would not have been singled out for it over your predecessors. For Allah did not

withhold any goodness from them and reserve it especially for you due to some virtue of yours. They were the companions of the Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ, the ones whom Allah chose for him, sent him among them, and described them with His praise, saying: *{Muḥammad is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are harsh against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and prostrating, seeking bounty from Allah and [His] pleasure.} [Surah al-Fatḥ: 29]*"

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah 3/61]

• **Wakīʿ ibn al-Jarrāḥ** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 197 AH) said:

أَهْلُ السُّنَّةِ يَقُولُونَ: الإِيمَانُ: قَوْلٌ وَعَمَلٌ ، وَالمُرْجِئَةُ يَقُولُونَ : الإِيمَانُ : قَوْلٌ، وَالجَهْمِيَّةُ يَقُولُونَ : الْإِيمَانُ -المَعْرِفَةُ.

"The people of the Sunnah say: Faith (Īmān) is speech and action. The Murji'ah say: Faith is speech (only). The Jahmiyyah say: Faith is merely knowledge."

[Al-Sharīʿah, 138]

• **Yaḥyā ibn Saʿīd al-Qaṭṭān** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 198 AH) said:

كان من أدركت من الأئمة يقولون: الإيمان قول وعمل يزيد وينقص.

"Those from the Imams whom I met used to say: Faith (Īmān) is speech and action; it increases and decreases."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah 3/109]

• A man asked **Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 241 AH) about the increase and decrease of faith (Īmān), He said:

يزيد حتى يبلغ أعلى السماوات السبع، وينقص حتى يصير إلى أسفل السافلين السبع.

"It increases until it reaches the highest of the seven heavens, and it decreases until it reaches the lowest depths of the seven layers."

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/210]

• Ḥamdān ibn ʿAlī al-Warrāq said:

سمعتُ أَحْمَد بن حنبل رَحِمَهُ اللهُ وذُكر عنده المرجئة، فقلت: إنهم يقولون إذا عرف الرجل ربه عز وجل بقلبه فهو مؤمن، فقال: المرجئة لا تقول هذا الجهمية تقول بهذا.

"I heard **Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal** (may Allah have mercy on him), and the Murji'ah were mentioned in his presence. So I said: 'They say that if a man knows his Lord the Almighty in his heart, then he is a believer.' He replied: 'The Murji'ah do not say this, it is the Jahmiyyah who say this'."

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/335]

• **Muṣʿab ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn Muṣʿab** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 236 AH) said:

لا أحب الكلام إلا فيما تحته عمل، فأما الكلام في الله فأحبُّ إلى السكوت عن هذه الأشياء.

"I do not like speech except under which, is action[10]. As for speaking about Allah, I prefer silence regarding such things."

[Tartīb al-Madārik 1/418]

• **Abū Zur'ah al-Rāzī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 264 AH) said:

الإيمان عندنا قول وعمل، يزيد وينقص، ومن قال غير ذلك فهو مبتدع مرجئ.

"Faith (Īmān), according to us, is speech and action; it increases and decreases. Whoever says other than this is an innovator, a Murji'."

[Tabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/59]

[10] Action with the heart or with limbs.

Stance of Salaf regarding Qadr[11] (Divine decree):

• ʿ**Abdullāh ibn Fayrūz** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d.90 AH) said:

وَقَعَ فِي نَفْسِي شَيْءٌ مِنْ هَذَا الْقَدَرِ، خَشِيتُ أَنْ يُفْسِدَ عَلَيَّ دِينِي وَأَمْرِي، فَأَتَيْتُ أُبَيَّ بْنَ كَعْبٍ فَقُلْتُ: أَبَا الْمُنْذِرِ، إِنَّهُ قَدْ وَقَعَ فِي نَفْسِي شَيْءٌ مِنْ هَذَا الْقَدَرِ فَخَشِيتُ عَلَى دِينِي وَأَمْرِي، فَحَدِّثْنِي مِنْ ذَلِكَ بِشَيْءٍ لَعَلَّ اللَّهَ أَنْ يَنْفَعَنِي بِهِ ، فَقَالَ: "لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَذَّبَ أَهْلَ سَمَاوَاتِهِ وَأَهْلَ أَرْضِهِ، لَعَذَّبَهُمْ وَهُوَ غَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ لَهُمْ ، وَلَوْ رَحِمَهُمْ لَكَانَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ، وَلَوْ كَانَ لَكَ جَبَلُ أُحُدٍ ذَهَبًا أَوْ مِثْلُ جَبَلِ أُحُدٍ - تُنْفِقُهُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ، مَا قَبِلَ مِنْكَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ، فَتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ مَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ، وَأَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ، وَأَنَّكَ إِنْ مُتَّ عَلَى غَيْرِ هَذَا دَخَلْتَ النَّارَ، وَلَا عَلَيْكَ أن تأتي أخِي عَبْدَ اللهِ بْنَ مَسْعُودٍ فَتَسْأَلَهُ، فَأَتَيْتُ عَبْدَ اللهِ، فَسَأَلْتُهُ، فَذَكَرَ مِثْلَ مَا قَالَ أبى، وَقَالَ لِي: وَلَا عَلَيْكَ أَنْ تَأْتِيَ حُذَيْفَةَ، فَأَتَيْتُ حُذَيْفَةَ، فَسَأَلْتُه، فَقَالَ مِثْلَ مَا قَالَا، وَقَالَ: ائْتِ زَيْدَ بْنَ ثَابِتٍ فَاسْأَلْهُ، فَأَتَيْتُ زَيْدَ بْنَ ثَابِتٍ، فَسَأَلْتُهُ، فَقَالَ: سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ ﷺ يَقُولُ: «لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَذَّبَ أَهْلَ سَمَاوَاتِهِ وَأَهْلَ أَرْضِهِ لَعَذَّبَهُمْ وَهُوَ غَيْرُ ظَالِمٍ لَهُمْ، وَلَوْ رَحِمَهُمْ لَكَانَتْ رَحْمَتُهُ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ مِنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ، وَلَو كَانَ لَكَ مِثْلُ أُحُدٍ ذَهَبًا - أَوْ مِثْلُ جَبَلِ أُحُدٍ ذَهَبًا - تُنْفِقُهُ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ مَا قَبِلَهُ مِنْكَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ، فَتَعْلَمَ أَنَّ مَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ، وَأَن مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ، وَأَنَّكَ إِنْ مُتَّ عَلَى غَيْرِ هَذَا دَخَلْتَ النَّارَ."

"Something about Qadr (divine decree) troubled me, and I feared that it might corrupt my religion and my affairs. So I went to Ubayy ibn Kaʿb and said: 'O Abū al-Mundhir,

[11] Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy upon him) said: And Qadr (Divine Decree) is to be believed in, and not used as an argument. Rather, the servant is commanded to return to Qadr when calamities occur, and to seek Allah's forgiveness for sins and faults, as the Most High said: "So be patient, indeed the promise of Allah is true, and seek forgiveness for your sin." [Ghāfir: 55] And for this reason Ādam argued with Mūsā when Mūsā blamed Ādam for the calamity that happened to him due to his eating from the tree. So Ādam said to him: "Indeed, this had been written before I was created." So Ādam argued successfully with Mūsā, just as the Most High said: "No disaster strikes on the earth or among yourselves except that it is in a register before We bring it into being, indeed that is easy for Allah." [al-Ḥadīd: 22] And the Most High said: "No calamity strikes except by permission of Allah, and whoever believes in Allah, He will guide his heart." [al-Taghābun: 11] Some of the Salaf said: He is the man who, when a calamity befalls him, knows that it is from Allah, so he is content and submits. So this is the angle from which Ādam argued with Qadr, and far be it from Allah that Ādam, or anyone less than him from the believers, should use Qadr as an argument for sins. For if this were acceptable, it would be acceptable for Iblīs and whoever follows him from the jinn and mankind to use it as an argument, and for the people of Nūḥ, ʿĀd, Thamūd, and the rest of the people of disbelief, sin, and transgression, and our Lord would not punish anyone. And this is something whose falsehood is known by necessity, both in Sharīʿah and in reason. For no sane person applies this consistently. If he did, it would necessitate that no one could be blamed for anything, nor punished for it. And this one who argues with Qadr, if someone were to commit a crime against him, he would seek retribution. So if Qadr were a valid excuse for the perpetrator against him, then it would not be a valid argument, not for this one, and not for that one. And if using Qadr as an argument were acceptable, people would not be able to live. For anyone who transgressed against them could argue using it, and they would have to accept his excuse and not punish him. And two people who follow this view could not live together, for each of them could kill the other and destroy all his affairs, using Qadr as an argument for doing so. [Iqtidhāʾ al-Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm, pp. 622–624]

something has occurred to my heart about this Qadr matter, and I fear for my religion and my affairs. So tell me something about it—perhaps Allah will benefit me through it.' He said: 'If Allah were to punish the inhabitants of His heavens and His earth, He would punish them and He would not be unjust to them. But if He had mercy on them, His mercy would be better for them than their deeds. And if you had gold equal to the mountain of Uhud, or something like the mountain of Uhud in gold, and you spent it in the path of Allah, it would not be accepted from you until you believe in Qadr, and know that what has befallen you could never have missed you, and what missed you could never have befallen you. And if you die without believing in this, you will enter the Fire. And there's no harm if you go to my brother ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd and ask him.' So I went to ʿAbdullāh and asked him. He said the same as Ubayy had said, and added: 'You may also go to Ḥudhayfah and ask him.' So I went to Ḥudhayfah and asked him, and he said the same, and added: 'Go to Zayd ibn Thābit and ask him.' So I went to Zayd ibn Thābit and asked him, and he said: 'I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: "If Allah were to punish the people of His heavens and His earth, He would punish them and He would not be unjust to them. But if He had mercy on them, His mercy would be better for them than their deeds. And if you had gold like the mountain of Uhud, and you spent it in the path of Allah, it would not be accepted from you until you believe in Qadr, and know that what has befallen you could never have missed you, and what missed you could never have befallen you, and that if you die not believing this, you will enter the Fire'."

[Sunan Ibn Mājah, No.77, Authenticated by al-Albānī]

• It was said to **Salman al-Farisi** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 33 AH):

مَا قَوْلُ النَّاسِ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ؟ قَالَ: حِينَ تُؤْمِنُ بِالْقَدَرِ، تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ مَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ، وَمَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ وَلَا تَقُولُ : لَوْ فَعَلْتُ كَذَا وَكَذَا، لَكَانَ كَذَا وَكَذَا، وَلَوْ لَمْ أَفْعَلْ كَذَا وَكَذَا، لَمْ يَكُنْ كَذَا وَكَذَا.

"What is the meaning of the people's saying: 'You will not truly believe until you believe in Qadr, its good and its evil'?" He said: "When you believe in Qadr, you know that what missed you was never going to afflict you, and what afflicted you was never going to miss you. And you do not say: 'If I had done such-and-such, then it would have been such-and-such,' or: 'If I had not done such-and-such, then such-and-such would not have happened'."

[Al-Sharīʿah, 220]

• ʿ**Ubādah ibn al-Ṣāmit** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 34 AH) said to his son when death approached him:

ا بُنَيَّ، أُوصِيكَ بِتَقْوَى اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ لَنْ تَتَّقِي اللَّهَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنَ بِاللَّهِ، وَاعْلَمْ أَنَّكَ لَنْ تُؤْمِنَ بِاللهِ، وَلَنْ تَطْعَمَ حَقِيقَةَ الْإِيمَانِ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْعِلْمَ حَتَّى تُؤْمِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ كُلِّهِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ. فَقَالَ له : يَا أَبَتِ، وَكَيْفَ لِي أَنْ أُو مِنَ بِالْقَدَرِ كُلِّهِ خَيْرِهِ وَشَرِّهِ؟ . قَالَ: تَعْلَمَ أَنَّ مَا أَصَابَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُخْطِئَكَ، وَمَا أَخْطَأَكَ لَمْ يَكُنْ لِيُصِيبَكَ، أَيْ بُنَيَّ إِنِّي سَمِعْتُ رَسُولَ اللهِ ، يَقُولُ: إِنَّ أَوَّلَ مَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ الْقَلَمَ قَالَ: اكْتُبْ، قَالَ : وَمَا أَكْتُبُ يَا رَبِّ قَالَ : اكْتُبِ الْقَدَرَ ، فَجَرَى الْقَلَمُ فِي تِلْكَ السَّاعَةِ بِمَا كَانَ وَمَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ إِلَى الْأَبَدِ.

"O my son, I advise you to have taqwā (consciousness and fear) of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic. And know that you will not have taqwā of Allah until you believe in Allah. And know that you will not truly believe in Allah, and you will not taste the reality of faith, and you will not attain knowledge, until you believe in Qadr – all of it, its good and its evil." He (the son) said to him: "O my father, and how can I believe in all of Qadr – its good and its evil?" He said: "That you know that what has afflicted you was never going to miss you, and what has missed you was never going to afflict you. O my son, I heard the Messenger of Allah ﷺ say: 'The first thing that Allah created was the Pen. He said to it: Write. It said: What should I write, my Lord? He said: Write the Qadr (decree) – so the Pen wrote in that very hour whatever was and whatever will be until eternity'."

[Al-Sharīʿah, 223]

• From **Ibn ʿUmar** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 73 AH), that he was asked about Qadr (Divine Decree), and he said:

شَيْءٌ أَرَادَ اللَّهُ تَعَالَى أَلَّا يُطْلِعَكُمْ عَلَيْهِ، فَلَا تُرِيدُوا مِنَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى مَا أَبَى عَلَيْكُمْ.

"It is something that Allah the Exalted willed not to disclose to you, so do not seek from Allah the Exalted what He has refused to reveal to you."

Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn al-Ḥusayn al-Ājurrī (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 360 AH) said, commenting on this report:

هَذَا مَعْنَى مَا قَالَ عُمَرُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (ت: ١٠١)، فِي رِسَالَتِهِ لِأَهْلِ الْقَدَرِ ، قَوْلُهُ: فَلَئِنْ قُلْتُمْ: قَدْ قَالَ اللَّهُ فِي كِتَابِهِ كَذَا وَكَذَا، يُقَالُ لَهُمْ: لَقَدْ فَرَؤوا مِنْهُ - يَعْنِي : الصَّحَابَةَ - مَا قَدْ قَرَأْتُمْ، وَعَلِمُوا مِنْ تَأْوِيلِهِ مَا جَهِلْتُمْ، ثُمَّ قَالُوا بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ : كُلُّهُ كِتَابٌ وَقَدَرٌ ، وَكَتَبَ الشَّقْوَةَ ، وَمَا قُدْرَ يَكُنْ، وَمَا شَاءَ كَانَ وَمَا لَمْ يَشَأْ لَمْ يَكُنْ ، وَلَا نَمْلِكُ لِأَنْفُسِنَا ضَرًّا وَلَا نَفْعًا، ثُمَّ رَغِبُوا بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ وَرَهِبُوا وَالسَّلَامُ.

"This is the meaning of what ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 101 AH) said in his letter[12] to the people of Qadr (Qadriyyah):'So if you say: "Allah has said such and such in His Book," it will be said to them: "Indeed, the Companions have recited from it, meaning: the Qur'an, what you have recited, and they knew from its interpretation what you are ignorant of. Then after all of that, they still said: All of it is from the Book and Qadr (Divine Decree); He has written [people's] wretchedness; whatever has been decreed will occur, and whatever He wills happens, and whatever He does not will does not happen. We do not possess for ourselves harm or benefit. Then, after all of that, they still had hope and fear, and peace'."

[Al-Sharīʿah, 245]

• It is reported from **Ibn Abbas** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 68 AH) that he said:

كُلُّ شَيْءٍ بِقَدَرٍ، حَتَّى وَضْعُكَ يَدَكَ عَلَى خَدِّكَ.

"Everything is by Qadr, even your placing your hand on your cheek."

[Al-Shari'ah, 225]

• He (may Allah be pleased with him) also said:

الْقَدَرُ نِظَامُ التَّوْحِيدِ ، فَمَنْ وَحَدَ اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ، وَآمَنَ بِالْقَدَرِ، فَهِيَ الْعُرْوَةُ الْوُثْقَى الَّتِي لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا ، وَمَنْ وَحَدَ اللَّهَ تَعَالَى، وَكَذَّبَ بِالْقَدَرِ ، نَقْضَ التَّوْحِيدَ.

"Qadr (Divine decree) is the framework of Tawheed[13]. So whoever affirms the Oneness of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and believes in Qadr, has grasped the firmest handhold which will never break. But whoever affirms the Oneness of Allah, the Exalted, yet denies Qadr, has undermined Tawheed."

[Al-Shari'ah, 226]

[12] It has been narrated in complete form by Abu Dawud in his Sunan (4612), authenticated by al-Albānī.

[13] This indicates that whoever does not believe in Qadr (Divine Decree), their monotheism (Tawheed) may be invalidated; because belief in Qadr is the foundation of Tawheed. This is the meaning of his (may Allah be pleased with him) statement: "The framework of Tawheed," meaning that through it Tawheed is properly ordered, made upright, and firmly established. Belief in Qadr is one of the fundamentals and pillars of faith, without which no one's faith can be complete. And Allah knows best.

• It is reported from **Muhammad ibn Sirin** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 110 AH) that he said:

مَا يُنْكِرُ قَوْمٌ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ جَلَ عَلِمَ شَيْئًا فَكَتَبَهُ؟

"What is it that the people deny, that Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, knew something and then wrote it?"

[Al-Shari'ah, 230]

• It is reported from **Iyas ibn Mu'awiyah** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 122 AH) that he said:

لَمْ أُخَاصِمْ بِعَقْلِي كُلِّهِ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ الْأَهْوَاءِ غَيْرَ أَهْلِ الْقَدَرِ، قُلْتُ: أَخْبِرُونِي عَنِ الظُّلْمِ فِي كَلَامِ الْعَرَبِ مَا هُوَ؟ قَالُوا: أَنْ يَأْخُذَ الرَّجُلُ مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ ، قُلْتُ: فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ كُلُّ شَيْءٍ.

"I have not argued with all of my intellect against any group among the people of desires (i.e., deviants) except the Qadriyyah (deniers of Divine Decree). I said to them: 'Tell me, what is injustice (ẓulm) in the Arabic language?' They said: 'It is when a man takes what is not his.' I said: 'Then indeed, everything belongs to Allah'."

[Al-Shari'ah, 231]

• Some of them have said:

وعاجزُ الرَّأْيِ مِضْيَاعُ الفُرْصَتِه، حتى إذا فات أَمْرٌ عاتبَ القَدَر.

"The one who lacks sound judgment wastes his opportunity, Then when the matter is lost, he blames fate (Qadr)"[14]

[ʿUyūn al-Akhbār, 2/540]

• It is reported from **Ṭāwūs ibn Kaysān al-Fārisi** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 106 AH) that he said:

مَا مِنْ شَيْءٍ يَتَكَلَّمُ بِهِ ابْنُ آدَمَ إِلَّا أُحْصِيَ عَلَيْهِ حَتَّى أَنِينَهُ فِي مَرَضِهِ.

[14] Ibn Al-Qayyim (May Allah have mercy on him) said: "The intelligent person blames himself while the ignorant person blames the Qadr of his Lord". [Madarij Al-Salikin, 1/101]

"There is nothing that the son of Adam says except that it is recorded against him, even his groaning in illness."

[Al-Ḥilyah, 4/4]

• It is reported from **Rabi'ah ibn Abī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 136 AH) that:

وَقَفَ غَيْلَانُ عَلَى رَبِيعَةَ بْنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ: فَقَالَ: يَا رَبِيعَهُ، أَيْنَ الَّذِي يَزْعُمُ أَنَّ اللهَ يُحِبُّ أَنْ يُعْصَى ؟ فَقَالَ لَهُ رَبِيعَةُ: وَيْلَكَ يَا غَيْلَانُ، أَوَ يُعْصَى اللَّهُ قَسْرًا قَالَ : فَكَأَنَّمَا أَلْقَمَهُ حَجَرًا .

Ghiylān approached Rabi'ah ibn Abī ʿAbd al-Raḥmān and said: "O Rabi'ah, what do you say about the one who claims that Allah loves to be disobeyed?" Rabi'ah replied: "Woe to you, O Ghiylān! Is Allah disobeyed by force?" It was as if he had made him swallow a stone (i.e., he was silenced completely).

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah, 1/533]

• **Mutarrif ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn as-Shakhīr** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 95 AH) said:

لَوْ أُخْرِجَ قَلْبِي فَجُعِلَ فِي يَدِي هَذِهِ اليَسَارِ، وَجِيءَ بِالْخَيْرِ فَجُعِلَ فِي هَذِهِ الْيُمْنَى، مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ أَنْ أُولِجَ قَلْبِي مِنْهُ شَيْئًا، حَتَّى يَكُونَ اللهُ تَعَالَى يَضَعُهُ.

"If my heart were taken out and placed in my left hand, and good were brought and placed in my right hand, I would not be able to insert any of it into my heart until Allah, Exalted is He, places it there."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah, 1/360]

• And He (may Allah have mercy on him) also said:

لَيْسَ لِأَحَدٍ أَنْ يَصْعَدَ فَيُلْقِي نَفْسَهُ مِنْ فَوْقِ الْبِئْرِ، وَيَقُولُ: قُدْرَ لِي ! وَلَكِنْ يَحْذَرُ وَيَجْتَهِدُ وَيَتَّقِي فَإِنْ أَصَابَهُ شَيْءٌ عَلِمَ أَنَّهُ لَمْ يُصِبْهُ إِلَّا مَا كَتَبَ اللهُ لَهُ.

"No one has the right to climb up and throw himself into a well and then say: 'It was destined for me!' Rather, he should be cautious, strive, and take precautions. Then, if something

befalls him, he will know that nothing happened to him except what Allah had written for him."

[Tahdhib al-Hilyah 1/360]

• Reported from **Ṣilah ibn Ashyam** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 76 AH):

ومَاتَ أَخٌه، فَأَتَاهُ رَجُلٌ وَهُوَ يَطْعَمُ، فَقَالَ : يَا أَبَا الصَّهْبَاءِ، إِنَّ أَخَاكَ مَاتَ! قَالَ : هَلُمَّ فَكُلْ، قُدْ نُعِيَ لَنَا! فَقَالَ: وَاللَّهِ مَا سَبَقَنِي إِلَيْكَ أَحَدٌ، فَمَنْ نَعَاهُ؟!. قَالَ : يَقُولُ اللهُ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى:{إِنَّكَ مَيِّتٌ وَإِنَّهُم مَّيِّتُون} [الزمر: ٣٠]

His brother died, so a man came to him while he was eating and said: "O Abū al-Ṣahbā', your brother has died!" He replied: "Come and eat, his death has already been announced to us!" The man said: "By Allah, no one reached you before me, so who announced it?" He (Ṣilah) replied: "Allah, Blessed and Exalted, says:*{Indeed, you (O Muhammad) will die, and indeed, they (too) will die} [Al-Zumar: 30]*."

[Ṣifat al-Ṣafwah 3/151]

• **Muḥammad ibn Wāsiʿ** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 123 AH) was asked:

مَا تَقُولُ فِي الْقَضَاءِ وَالْقَدَرِ؟ قَالَ: إِنَّ اللهَ عَزَّوجَل لَا يَسْأَلُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ عِبَادَهُ عَنْ قَضَائِهِ وَقَدَرِهِ، إِنَّمَا يَسْأَلُهُمْ عَنْ أَعْمَالِهِمْ.

"What do you say about divine decree and predestination (qaḍāʾ wa-qadr)?" He replied: "Indeed, Allah, the Almighty and Majestic, will not ask His servants on the Day of Judgment about His decree and predestination; rather, He will ask them about their deeds."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah 1/415]

• **Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 110 AH) said:

مَنْ كَذَّبَ بِالْقَدَرِ فَقَدْ كَفَرَ.

"Whoever denies divine decree (Qadr) has disbelieved."

[Al-Zuhd by Aḥmad, 481]

• It was narrated from ʿ**Abd Allāh ibn Ṭāhir ibn al-Ḥusayn**[15] (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 230 AH):

أَنَّهُ دَعَا الْحُسَيْنَ ابْنَ الْفَضْلِ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ (ت: ٢٨٢) وَقَالَ لَهُ: أَشْكَلَتْ عَلَيَّ ثَلَاثُ آيَاتٍ دَعَوْتُكَ لِتَكْشِفَهَا لِي : قَوْلُهُ تَعَالَى : فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ) [المائدة: ٣١]، وَقَدْ صَحَ: أَنَّ النَّدَمَ تَوْبَةٌ ، وَقَوْلُهُ: {كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ} [الرحمن: ٢٩] وَقَدْ صَحَ : أَنَّ الْقَلَمَ جَفَّ بِمَا هُوَ كَائِنٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ الْقِيَامَةِ، وَقَوْلِهِ : {وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى} [النجم: ٣٩]، فَمَا بَالُ الْأَضْعَافِ؟

فَقَالَ الْحُسَيْنُ : يَجُوزُ أَلَّا يَكُونَ النَّدَمُ تَوْبَةً فِي تِلْكَ الْأُمَّةِ، وَيَكُونُ تَوْبَةٌ فِي هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ، لِأَنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى خَصَّ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةَ بِخَصَائِصَ لَمْ تُشَارِكْهُمْ فِيهَا الْأُمَمُ، وَقِيلَ: إِنَّ نَدَمَ قَابِيلَ لَمْ يَكُنْ عَلَى قَتْلِ هَابِيلَ وَلَكِنْ عَلَى حَمْلِهِ، وَأَمَّا قَوْلُهُ: كُلَّ يَوْمٍ هُوَ فِي شَأْنٍ فَإِنَّهَا شؤون يُبْدِيهَا لَا شؤون يَبْتَدِيهَا. وَأَمَّا قَوْلُهُ : {وَأَن لَّيْسَ لِلْإِنسَانِ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى} ، فَمَعْنَاهُ: لَيْسَ لَهُ إِلَّا مَا سَعَى عَدْلًا وَلِي أَنْ أَجْزِيَهُ بِوَاحِدَةٍ أَلْفًا فَضْلًا، فَقَامَ عَبْدُ اللهِ وَقَبَّلَ رَأْسَهُ.

He once called for **al-Ḥusayn ibn al-Faḍl** (may Allah have mercy on him, d. 282 AH) and said to him: "Three verses have confused me, and I have called you to help clarify them for me: The saying of the Most High: *{He became of those who regret} [al-Mā'idah: 31]*, while it is authentically reported that regret is repentance[16]. And His saying: *{Every day He is in [some] affair} [ar-Raḥmān: 29]*, while it is authentically reported: 'The Pen has dried with what will be until the Day of Resurrection.'[17] And His saying: *{And that man will have nothing except what he strives for} [an-Najm: 39]*, so what then of the multiplied rewards?"

Al-Ḥusayn said: "It is possible that regret was not considered repentance in that nation, but it is considered repentance in this nation, because Allah, Exalted is He, has favored this nation with qualities not shared by other nations. And it has been said: Qābīl's regret was not for killing Hābīl, but for the burden he carried because of it. As for His saying: *{Every day He is [engaged] in [some] affair}*, these are affairs He manifests, not affairs He initiates anew.[18] As for His saying: *{And that man will have nothing except what he strives for}*, it

[15] Deputy of Khorasan and the lands adjacent to it, on behalf of Caliph Al-Ma'mun.

[16] Reported by Ibn Mājah in his Sunan (Hadith no. 4252) and by Imām Aḥmad in his Musnad (Hadith no. 3568), from the narration of ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be pleased with him), and it was authenticated by the noble Shaykh, the ḥadīth scholar, al-Albānī (may Allāh have mercy on him).

[17] Narrated by al-Tirmidhī (Hadith no. 2516), and by Imām Aḥmad (Hadith nos. 2669, 2763, 2803), and it was authenticated by the noble Shaykh, the ḥadīth scholar, al-Albānī (may Allāh have mercy on him).

[18] The meaning of *"affairs He manifests, not affairs He initiates anew"*: *"Affairs He manifests"* means: Allah, Blessed and Exalted, brings them forth into the realm of existence according to what Allah, Majestic is His Glory, has known beforehand in His eternal knowledge. So, what was hidden (unseen) with Him, He brings its knowledge into the seen world at the time Allah, Glorified and Exalted, has determined.
Thus, the meaning of *{Every day He is (engaged) in some affair}* is: that there is a decree for what will occur each day for the creation. And this does not contradict at all what has already been written in the Preserved Tablet (al-Lawḥ al-Maḥfūẓ). These are affairs He manifests and reveals, not affairs He originates anew. For this knowledge

means: he has nothing by way of justice except what he strives for, but I (i.e., Allah) may reward him for one deed with a thousand, as a favor." At this, ʿAbd Allāh stood up and kissed his (al-Ḥusayn's) head.

[Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī (20/135–136), Fatḥ al-Bārī (11/599), abridged]

• **Ibn Abī Yaʿlā** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

معتقدنا ومعتقد الوالد السعيد أبي يعلى رحمة الله (ت: ٤٥٨) ومن تقدمه من أئمتنا: مبني على حرفين:

السكوت عن " لم؟" في أفعاله عَزَّوَجَلَّ. وعن "كيف"؟ في أوصافه تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

"Our creed, and the creed of my blessed father Abū Yaʿlā (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 458 AH), and of those imams who preceded him, is built upon two principles:

Remaining silent regarding 'Why?' regarding the actions of the Almighty, Exalted and Majestic. And remaining silent regarding 'How?' concerning His attributes, Blessed and Exalted is He."[19]

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila 3/416]

is not a newly-begun knowledge, nor is it a created (or originated) knowledge, rather it is in accordance with the knowledge of Allah, Glorified and Exalted be He.

[19] Remaining silent about "Why?": closes the door to delving into the topic of Divine Decree (al-Qadr) and objecting to His judgments, laws, and legislation. And remaining silent about "How?": closes the door to delving into the topic of the Attributes of Allah, through interpretation, distortion, or likening (Him to creation). And in these two matters, many people have gone astray.

Stance of the Salaf regarding Istiwā' (Allah's rising over the Throne) and the Highness of Allah:

• ʻAbbad ibn al-ʻAwwām (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 186 AH) narrated:

قَدِمَ عَلَيْنَا شَرِيكُ القَاضِي النَّخَعِيُّ رَحِمَهُ اللهُ (ت: ١٧٧) ، وَاسِطَ فَقُلْنَا لَهُ : إِنَّ عِنْدَنَا قَوْمًا يُنْكِرُونَ هَذِهِ الْأَحَادِيثَ : "إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ يَنْزِلُ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا" ، فَقَالَ شَرِيكٌ: إِنَّمَا جَاءَنَا بِهَذِهِ الْأَحَادِيثِ مَنْ جَاءَ بِالسُّنَنِ عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ الصَّلَاةِ، وَالصِّيَامِ، وَالزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ، وَإِنَّمَا عَرَفْنَا اللَّهَ عَزَّوَجَلَّ بِهَذِهِ الْأَحَادِيثِ.

"**Shurayk al-Qāḍī al-Nakhaʿī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 177 AH) came to us in Wāsiṭ, so we said to him: 'Among us are people who deny these aḥādīth: 'Indeed, Allah, Mighty and Majestic, descends to the lowest heaven'[20]." So Shurayk said: 'The ones who brought us these aḥādīth are the same ones who brought us the Sunan (narrations) from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ about prayer, fasting, zakāh, and ḥajj. It is through these aḥādīth that we have come to know Allah, Mighty and Majestic'."

[Al-Sharīʿah, 695]

• **Imām Mālik ibn Anas** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 179 AH) said:

اللَّهُ عَزَّوَجَلَّ فِي السَّمَاءِ وَعِلْمُهُ فِي كُلِّ مَكَانٍ لَا يَخْلُو مِنْ عِلْمِهِ مَكَانٌ، وَتَلَا هَذِهِ الْآيَةَ: {مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ وَلَا خَمْسَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ سَادِسُهُمْ} [المجادلة: ٧].

"Allah, Mighty and Majestic, is above the heaven, and His knowledge is in every place. There is no place that is devoid of His knowledge." Then he recited this verse: *{There is no private conversation of three but that He is the fourth of them, nor of five but that He is the sixth of them...} [Al-Mujādilah: 7]*.

[Al-Sunnah by ʿAbdullāh ibn Aḥmad: 11, Al-Sharīʿah: 652, abridged]

• Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated:

سأل رجل الإمام مالك بن أنس رحمه الله. فقال : {عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى} كيف استوى يا أبا عبدالله ؟ فقال: الاستواء منه معلوم، والكيف منه غير معقول، والسؤال عن هذا بدعة والإيمان به واجب.

[20] Agreed upon: [narrated by] al-Bukhari (no. 1145) and Muslim (no. 758), from the hadith of Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him).

A man asked Imām **Mālik ibn Anas** (may Allah have mercy on him), saying: "*{He rose over the Throne}*, How did He rise, O Abū ʿAbdullāh?" Mālik replied: "The istiwā' (rising) is known, the how is inconceivable, asking about it is an innovation, and believing in it is obligatory."

Al-Walīd ibn Muslim said:

وقال الوليد بن مسلم : سألت مالكًا عن هذه الأحاديث فقال : اقرأها كما جاءت، وكره أن يحدث بها عوام الناس الذين لا يعرفون وجهه، ولا تبلغه عقولهم، فينكروه، أو يضعوه في غير موضعه.

I asked **Mālik** about these aḥādīth (narrations regarding the divine attributes), and he said: "Recite them as they have come." He disliked that they be narrated to the general public who do not understand their meaning, and whose minds cannot grasp them, lest they deny them or misinterpret them.

[Tartīb al-Madārik 1/166]

• From **al-Ḍaḥḥāk ibn Muzāḥim** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 105 AH) :

{مَا يَكُونُ مِن نَّجْوَى ثَلَاثَةٍ إِلَّا هُوَ رَابِعُهُمْ} [المجادلة: ٧] قَالَ : هو عَلى العرش وعلمه معهم.

Regarding the verse: *{There is no private conversation of three but that He is the fourth of them} [Al-Mujādilah: 7]*, he said: "He is upon the Throne, and His knowledge is with them."

Imām Aḥmad (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

هذه السُّنة.

"This is the Sunnah."

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/191]

Stance of Salaf regarding Ṣifāt (attributes) of Allah[21]:

• Ibn Abī Mulaykah (may Allah have mercy on him) reported:

سُئِلَ أَبُو بكر الصديق رَضَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ (ت: ١٣) عَنْ آيَةٍ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللهِ فقال: أَيَّةُ أَرضٍ تُقِلُّنِي، وَأَيَّةُ سَمَاءٍ تُظِلُّنِي، وَأَينَ أَذهَبُ أَو كَيْفَ أَصْنَعُ إِذَا أَنَا قُلتُ فِي آيَةٍ مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ بِغَيْرِ مَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِهَا ؟

Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 13 AH) was asked about a verse from the Book of Allah. He replied: "Which earth would carry me, and which sky would shade me, and where would I go, or what could I do, if I were to say about a verse from the Book of Allah something other than what Allah intended by it?"

Anas ibn Mālik, narrated that:

إِنَّ عُمَرَ بْنِ الْخَطَّابِ رَضَ لِتَهُ عَنْهُمَا (ت: ٢٣) قَرَأَ عَلَى الْمِنْبَرِ {وفاكهة وأبا} [عبس: ٣١] فَقَالَ : هَذِهِ الْفَاكِهَةُ قَدْ عَرَفْنَاهَا فَمَا الْأَبُّ؟ ثُمَّ رَجَعَ إِلَى نَفْسِهِ فَقَالَ: لَعَمْرُكَ إِنَّ هَذَا لَهُوَ التَّكَلُّفُ يَا عُمَرُ .

ʿ**Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb** (may Allah be pleased with them both) (d. 23 AH) once recited from the minbar (pulpit) the verse: {And fruits and herbage} [ʿAbasa: 31]. Then he said: "This Fākihah (fruit)—we understand. But what is al-abb (the herbage)?" Then he turned back to himself and said: "By Allah, O ʿUmar, this is indeed unnecessary over-analysis (takalluf)!"

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[21] Al-Barbahārī (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Everything you hear from the transmitted reports (āthār) which your intellect cannot comprehend—such as the saying of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: 'The hearts of the servants are between two fingers from the Fingers of the Most Merciful,' and his saying: 'Indeed, Allah ﷻ descends to the lowest heaven,' and: 'He descends on the Day of Judgment,' and: 'Hellfire will continue to be thrown into until the Lord—glorified be His praise—places His foot upon it,' and the saying of Allah, the Exalted, to the servant: 'If you walk to Me, I will run to you,' and his saying: 'Indeed, Allah ﷻ descends on the Day of 'Arafah,' and His saying: 'Allah created Adam in His image,' and the saying of the Prophet ﷺ: 'I saw my Lord in the most beautiful form', and other narrations like these: Then your duty is to submit, affirm, entrust it (to Allah), and be content. Do not interpret any of it according to your desires, for believing in this is obligatory. Whoever interprets any of this according to his desires or rejects it, then he is a Jahmī." [Sharḥ al-Sunnah, pp. 74–76]
Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The Companions differed over many matters of legal rulings (aḥkām), but—praise be to Allah—they did not differ in a single matter regarding the Names, Attributes, or Actions of Allah. Rather, they were all united in affirming what is stated in the Book and the Sunnah—with one voice, from the first of them to the last. They did not subject them to interpretation (ta'wīl), nor distort them from their proper meanings (taḥrīf), nor invalidate any part of them, nor set up likenesses (tamthīl) for them, nor challenge their fronts and backs, nor did any of them say: 'These texts must be diverted from their literal meanings and carried upon figurative interpretation (majāz).' Rather, they received them with acceptance and submission, and responded to them with faith and reverence." [Iʿlām al-Muwaqqiʿīn, 1/ 52]

Ibn Abī Yaʿlā (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

حسبك لشيخي الإسلام، وإمامي الهدى، وخليفتي رسول الله ، الهادِيَيْن الراشدين، توقفهما وإحجامهما عن تفسير آية من كتاب الله جل وعز، و وهما أعلم الخلق بالله عَزَّوَجَلَّ بعد رَسُول الله ﷺ، وبرسوله وبكتاب الله وتأويله، فماذا عسى أن نقول في جسارة المعتزلة والأشاعرة، وبقية المتكلمين الضالين في تأويل صفات الرحمن عَزَّوَجَلَّ، الَّتِي نَطَق بها القرآن، ونقلها الأئمة الأثبات، والعلماء الثقات؟

"It is sufficient for you— that (the two) Shaykhs of Islam, Imams of guidance, and successors of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, the rightly guided leaders—that they refrained and held back from interpreting a single verse from the Book of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, despite being the most knowledgeable of creation about Allah—Glorified and Exalted be He—after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the most knowledgeable about His Messenger, His Book, and its interpretation. So what can we possibly say about the boldness of the Muʿtazilah, the Ashʿarīs, and the rest of the misguided theologians (mutakallimūn) in their interpretations of the Attributes of the Most Merciful—those attributes which the Qur'an has explicitly affirmed, and which were transmitted by the trustworthy imams and reliable scholars?"

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 3/263–264]

• A man said to **Az-Zuhrī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 124 AH):

يَا أَبَا بَكْرٍ، حَدِيثُ رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ: "لَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَطَمَ الْخُدُودَ" ، "وَلَيْسَ مِنَّا مَنْ لَمْ يُوَقِّرْ كَبِيرَنَا" ، وَمَا أَشْبَهَ مِنَ الْحَدِيثِ ؟ فَأَطْرَقَ سَاعَةً، ثُمَّ رَفَعَ رَأْسَهُ فَقَالَ: «مِنَ اللهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ العِلْمُ، وَعَلَى الرَّسُولِ ﷺ الْبَلَاغُ، وَعَلَيْنَا التَّسْلِيمُ.

"O Abā Bakr, the hadith of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ: 'He is not one of us who slaps the cheeks'[22], and 'He is not one of us who does not show respect to our elders'[23], and other similar hadiths, what about them?" So he lowered his head for a while, then raised it and said: "Knowledge is from Allah, the message is upon the Messenger ﷺ, and upon us is submission."[24]

[As-Sunnah by Al-Khallāl, 1001]

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[22] Agreed upon: al-Bukhārī: (1294), Muslim: (103)— from the ḥadīth of ʿAbdullāh ibn Masʿūd (may Allāh be pleased with him).

[23] Narrated with this wording by Imām Aḥmad in his Musnad (6935–6937)— Its original is in "Sunan" with another wording: from the ḥadīth of ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr ibn al-ʿĀṣ (may Allāh be pleased with him).

[24] It was also transmitted by Imām Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr in al-Tamhīd (14/6): from al-Awzāʿī who said: "From Allāh the revelation (tanzīl), upon His Messenger the conveying (tablīgh), and upon us submission (taslīm).

• It has been reported From Imām **Muḥammad ibn Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī** (may Allah have mercy on him):

قد سُئِل عَنْ صفات الله وما ينبغي أن يؤمن به : الله تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى أسماء وصفات جاء بها كتابه، وأخبر بها نبيه ﷺ أمته .. فمن خالف ذلك بعد ثبوت الحجة عليه فهو بالله كافر، فأما قبل ثبوت الحجة عليه من جهة الخبر فمعذور بالجهل؛ لأنَّ عِلم ذلك لا يُدرك بالعقل، ولا بالرَّوِيّة والفكر، ونحو ذلك أخبار الله سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى، أتانا أنه سميع، وأن له يدين، بقوله: {بَلْ يَدَاهُ مَبْسُوطَتَانِ} [المائدة:٦٤]، وأن له يمينا بقوله: {وَالسَّمَوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتُ بِيَمِينِهِ} [الزمر: ١١]، وأن له وجها بقوله: {كُلُّ شَيْءٍ هَالِكٌ إِلَّا وجهه} [القصص : ٨٨]، وقوله: {وَيَبْقَى وَجْهُ رَبِّكَ ذُو الْجَلَالِ وَالْإِكْرَامِ} [الرحمن: ٢٧]، وأن له قدما بقول النبي ﷺ: «حتى يضع الرب فيها قدمه»، يعني جهنم، وأنه يضحك من عبده المؤمن بقول النبي ﷺ للذي قُتل في سبيل الله : «إنه لقي الله وهو يضحك إليه»، وأنه يهبط كل ليلة إلى سماء الدنيا بخبر رَسُول الله ﷺ بذلك، وأنه ليس بأغور بقول النبي ﷺ إذ ذكر الدجال فقال: «إنه أعور وإن ربكم ليس بأعور»، وأن المؤمنين يرون ربهم يوم القيامة بأبصارهم كما يرون القمر ليلة البدر، وأن له إصبعًا بقول النبي: ما من قلب إلا وهو بين إصبعين من أصابع الرحمن عزوجل، فإن هذه المعاني التي وصف الله بها نفسه ووصفه بها رسوله مما لا يُدرك حقيقته بالفكر والروية، فلا يكفر بالجهل بها أحد، إلا بعد انتهاء الخبر إليه بها، فإن كان الوارد بذلك خبرا يقوم في الفهم مقام المشاهدة في السماع وجبت الدينونة على سامعه بحقيقته والشهادة عليه، كما عاين وسمع من رَسُول الله ، ولكن يثبت هذه الصفات وينفي التشبيه، كما نفى ذلك عَنْ نفسه تعالى ذكره فقال: {لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ وَهُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ} [الشورى: ١١].

He was asked about the attributes of Allah and what one must believe concerning them, He replied: “Allah, Blessed and Exalted, has names and attributes which have come in His Book, and which His Prophet ﷺ informed his nation about. Whoever opposes these after the proof has been established against him is a disbeliever in Allah. As for one before the proof reaches him via transmission, he is excused due to ignorance, because knowledge of these matters cannot be attained through reason, contemplation, or intellectual reflection. Such are the reports concerning Allah, Glorified is He. It has come to us that He is All-Hearing, that He has two hands, as in His saying: *{Rather, both His hands are extended} [al-Mā’idah: 64]*, and that He has a right hand, as in His saying: *{And the heavens will be rolled up in His right hand} [az-Zumar: 67]*. And that He has a face, as in His saying: *{Everything will perish except His Face} [al-Qaṣaṣ: 88]*, and: *{There will remain the Face of your Lord, Owner of Majesty and Honor} [ar-Raḥmān: 27]*. And that He has a foot, based on the Prophet’s ﷺ statement: ‘Until the Lord places His foot in it,’ referring to Hellfire. And that He laughs at His believing servant, based on the Prophet’s ﷺ words about one who was killed in the path of Allah: ‘He met Allah while He was laughing at him.’ And that He descends every night to the lowest heaven, as reported from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. And that He is not one-eyed, as the Prophet ﷺ said when mentioning the Dajjāl: ‘He is one-eyed, and your Lord is not one-eyed.’ And that the believers will see their Lord on the

Day of Judgment with their eyes, just as they see the full moon on a clear night. And that He has fingers, as the Prophet ﷺ said: 'There is no heart except that it is between two fingers of the Most Merciful.' These attributes with which Allah described Himself and with which His Messenger ﷺ described Him, their reality cannot be grasped by thought or reflection. So no one is declared a disbeliever for being ignorant of them, unless the report concerning them reaches him. If the report that reaches him is of a kind that carries the same weight in understanding as direct observation, then it becomes obligatory upon the hearer to affirm its reality and to bear witness to it, just as if he had seen and heard it from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. However, these attributes must be affirmed without likening (tashbīh) Allah to His creation as He Himself negated that about Himself, saying: *{There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearing, the All-Seeing.} [ash-Shūrā: 11]*."

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah 2/268–270]

• Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 241 AH) said:

من قال إن الله خلق آدم على صورة آدم فهو جَهمي، وأي صورة كانت لآدم قبل أن يخلقه؟

"Whoever says that Allah created Adam in the image of Adam is a Jahmī (i.e., follower of the deviant sect of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān). And what image did Adam have before Allah created him?"

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah, 2/337]

• Al-Walīd ibn Muslim (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 195 AH) said:

سَأَلْتُ الْأَوْزَاعِيَّ: (ت:١٥٧)، وَالثَّوْرِيَّ: (ت: ١٦١)، وَمَالِكَ بْنَ أَنَسٍ: (ت: ١٧٩)، وَاللَّيْثَ بْنَ سَعْدٍ: (ت: ١٧٥) - رَحِمَهُ اللهُ تعالى - عَنِ الْأَحَادِيثِ الَّتِي فِيهَا الصِّفَاتُ؟ فَكُلُّهُمْ قَالُوا: أَمِرُّوهَا كَمَا جَاءَتْ بِلَا تَفْسِيرٍ.

"I asked **Al-Awzāʿī** (d. 157 AH), **Ath-Thawrī** (d. 161 AH), **Mālik ibn Anas** (d. 179 AH), and **Al-Layth ibn Saʿd** (d. 175 AH), may Allah have mercy on them, about the hadiths that mention [Allah's] attributes. They all said: 'Let them pass as they have come, without interpretation (tafsīr).'"[25]

[25] That is: an explanation of the howness (kayfiyyah), not an explanation of the meanings of the words. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "The intent of the Salaf by their saying 'without how (bilā kayf)' is the negation of ta'wīl (distortive interpretation), for that is the takyīf (assigning a howness) claimed by the people of ta'wīl. For they are the ones who affirm a kayfiyyah that contradicts the reality, and thus fall into three grave errors: the negation of the reality, the affirmation of takyīf through ta'wīl, and the negation of

[Ash-Sharīʿah, no. 720]

• A man came to **Imam Mālik ibn Anas** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 179 AH), and said:

يَا أَبَا عَبْدِ اللهِ {الرَّحْمَنُ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ اسْتَوَى} [طه: ٥] ، كَيْفَ اسْتَوَى ؟ قَالَ : فَمَا رَأَيْنَا مَالِكًا وَجَدَ مِنْ شَيْءٍ كَوَجْدِهِ مِنْ مَقَالَتِهِ، وَعَلَاهُ الرُّحَضَاءُ ، وَأَطْرَقَ، وَجَعَلْنَا نَنْتَظِرُ مَا يَأْمُرُ بِهِ فِيهِ، قَالَ : ثُمَّ سُرِّيَ عَنْ مَالِكٍ، فَقَالَ : الْكَيْفُ غَيْرُ مَعْقُولٍ، وَالِاسْتِوَاءُ مِنْهُ غَيْرُ مَجْهُولٍ، وَالإِيمَانُ بِهِ وَاجِبٌ، وَالسُّؤَالُ عَنْهُ بِدْعَةٌ، وَإِنِّي لَأَخَافُ أَنْ تَكُونَ ضَالًّا، ثُمَّ أَمَرَ بِهِ فَأُخْرِجَ.

"O Abū ʿAbdullāh, *{The Most Merciful rose over the Throne} [Sūrah Tā-Hā: 5],* how did He rise?" It was said: We did not see Mālik affected by anything as he was by this statement. His face changed, and sweat appeared on him. He lowered his head, and we waited to see what he would say about the matter. Then, once he recovered, he said: "The how is incomprehensible, the istiwā' (rising over) is not unknown, belief in it is obligatory, and asking about it is an innovation (bidʿah). And I fear that you are a deviant." Then he ordered that the man be removed.[26]

[Imām al-Dārimī, ar-Radd ʿala al-Jahmiyyah, 104]

• It was reported from **ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ibn Mahdī** (may Allah have mercy on him, d. 198 AH):

لِفَتًى مِنْ وَلَدِ جَعْفَرِ ابْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ الْهَاشِمِيِّ : بَلَغَنِي أَنَّكَ تَتَكَلَّمُ فِي الرَّبِّ وَتَصِفُهُ وَتُشَبِّهُهُ، قَالَ: نَعَمْ يَا أَبَا سَعِيدٍ، نَظَرْنَا فَلَمْ نَرَ مِنْ خَلْقِ اللهِ شَيْئًا أَحْسَنَ وَلَا أَوْلَى مِنَ الْإِنْسَانِ، فَأَخَذَ يَتَكَلَّمُ فِي الصِّفَةِ، فَقَالَ لَهُ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ: رُوَيْدَكَ يَا بُنَيَّ حَتَّى نَتَكَلَّمَ أَوَّلَ شَيْءٍ فِي المَخْلُوقِ، فَإِنْ عَجَزْنَا عَنِ المَخْلُوقِ فَنَحْنُ عَنِ الخَالِقِ أَعْجَزُ وَأَعْجَزُ. أَخْبِرْنِي عَنْ حَدِيثٍ حَدَّثَنِيهِ شُعْبَةُ، عَنِ الشَّيْبَانِيِّ

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the Lord, Exalted is He, of the attribute which He affirmed for Himself. As for the people of affirmation (Ahl al-Ithbāt), none of them describes how Allah affirmed something for Himself, nor says: its how is such and such, such that the saying of the Salaf 'bilā kayf' would be a refutation of him. Rather, they (the Salaf) only refuted the people of ta'wīl, which involves distortion and negation, distortion of the wording and negation of the meaning." [Ijtimāʿ al-Juyūsh al-Islāmiyyah, p. 302]

[26] Ibn Battah reported in al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 120), and al-Lālikā'ī in Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah (no. 577), a similar narration from Umm Salamah (may Allah be pleased with her), but its chain is weak, as stated by the editor Abū Mālik al-Rayyāshī. Likewise, Ibn Battah in al-Ibānah al-Kubrā (no. 121), and al-Lālikā'ī in Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād (no. 579), reported from Ibn 'Uyaynah, who said: Rabi'ah was asked about the verse: {The Most Merciful rose over the Throne} [Ṭā-Hā 20:5], How did He rise? He replied: "The istiwā' is not unknown, the how is not comprehensible, from Allah is the Message, upon the Messenger is the delivery, and upon us is to affirm (believe)." The verifier, Abū Mālik al-Rayyāshī, said: "This is an authentic narration," and he noted that both Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Dhahabī also declared it authentic.

قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ زِرًا، قَالَ: قَالَ عبد الله بن مسعود رَضَ لَهُ عَنْهُ فِي قَوْلِهِ : {لَقَدْ رَأَى مِنْ ءَايَـٰتِ رَبِّهِ الْكُبْرَى} [النجم: ١٨] رَأَى جِبْرِيلَ لَهُ سِتْمِائَةِ جَنَاحٍ ، قَالَ : نَعَمْ، فَعَرَفَ الحَدِيثَ، فَقَالَ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ: صَفْ لِي خَلْقًا مِنْ خَلْقِ اللَّهِ لَهُ سِتِّمِائَةِ جَنَاحٍ ؟فَبَقِيَ الْغُلَامُ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ، فَقَالَ عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ: يَا بُنَيَّ، فَإِنِّي أُهَوِّنُ عَلَيْكَ الْمَسْأَلَةَ وَأَضَعُ عَنْكَ خَمْسَمِائَةٍ وَسَبْعَةٍ وَتِسْعِينَ، صَفْ لِي خَلْقًا بِثَلَاثَةِ أَجْنِحَةٍ، ركب الجناح الثَّالِث مِنْهُ مَوْضِعًا غَيْرَ المَوْضِعَيْنِ اللَّذَيْنِ رَكَّبَهُمَا اللهُ حَتَّى أَعْلَمَ ؟ فَقَالَ: يَا أَبَا سَعِيدٍ، نَحْنُ قَدْ عَجَزْنَا عَنْ صِفَةِ الْمَخْلُوقِ، وَنَحْنُ عَنْ صِفَةِ الْخَالِقِ أَعْجَزُ وَأَعْجَزُ، فَأُشْهِدُكَ أَنِّي قَدْ رَجَعْتُ عَنْ ذَلِكَ، وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللهَ.

He said to a young man from the descendants of Ja‘far ibn Sulaymān al-Hāshimī: “It has reached me that you speak about the Lord and describe Him and liken Him [to the creation].” The young man replied: “Yes, O Abū Sa‘īd, We looked [into the matter] and found that there is nothing in Allah’s creation more beautiful or more worthy [to be used as a point of reference] than man.” So he began to speak about the attributes [of Allah in terms resembling human features]. ‘Abd al-Raḥmān said to him: “Hold on, my son. Let us first speak about a created being. If we are incapable of understanding the creation, then we are even more incapable—far more incapable—of understanding the Creator. Tell me about a ḥadīth I was told by Shu‘bah, from ash-Shaybānī, who said: I heard Zirr say that ‘Abdullāh ibn Mas‘ūd (may Allah be pleased with him) said about the verse: {Indeed, he saw of the greatest signs of his Lord} [An-Najm 53:18], that he saw Jibrīl (Gabriel), who had six hundred wings[27]. The young man replied: “Yes, I know the ḥadīth.” So ‘Abd al-Raḥmān said: “Then describe to me a created being from among Allah’s creation that has six hundred wings.” The young man stared at him, unable to respond. So ‘Abd al-Raḥmān said: “My son, I will make it easier for you. I will take away five hundred and ninety-seven of them. Just describe to me a being with three wings, where the third wing is attached in a different place from the other two, so I can understand it.” The young man said: “O Abū Sa‘īd, we have failed to comprehend the description of a created being, and we are even more incapable of comprehending the description of the Creator. I bear witness before you that I have repented from this [approach], and I seek Allah’s forgiveness.”

[al-Ḥilyah 8/9, Sharḥ Uṣūl I‘tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah, 815]

- It was reported from **Abū ‘Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn Faḍl al-Bajalī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 282 AH):

وَسُئِلَه عَنِ الاسْتِوَاءِ، وَقِيلَ لَهُ: كَيْفَ اسْتَوَى عَلَى عَرْشِهِ ؟ فَقَالَ: إِنَّا لَا نَعْرِفُ مِنْ أَنْبَاءِ الغَيبِ إِلَّا مِقْدَارَ مَا كُشِفَ لَنَا، وَقَدْ أَعْلَمَنَا جَلَّ ذِكْرُهُ أَنَّهُ اسْتَوَى عَلَى عَرْشِهِ، وَلَمْ يُخْبِرْنَا كَيْفَ اسْتَوَى.

[27] Narrated by Muslim: (174), and there is an error in the narration of Abū Nu‘aym: from al-Shaybānī, who said: 'I heard Sa‘īd ibn Jubayr,' instead of: 'I heard Zirr.' This was pointed out by the verifier Abū Mālik al-Riyāshī.

He was asked about al-istiwā' (Allah's rising over the Throne), and it was said to him: "How did He rise over His Throne?" He replied: "We do not know anything of the unseen except what has been revealed to us. Allah, exalted is His mention, has informed us that He rose over His Throne, but He did not inform us how He rose."

[ʻAqīdat as-Salaf wa Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, 185]

• **Al-Fuḍayl ibn ʻIyāḍ** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 187 AH) said:

إِذَا قَالَ لَكَ الْجَهْمِيُّ : أَنَا أَكْفُرُ بِرَبٍّ يَزُولُ عَنْ مَكَانِهِ: فَقُلْ: أَنَا أُومِنُ بِرَبٍّ يَفْعَلُ مَا يَشَاءُ.

"If a Jahmī (a follower of Jahm ibn Ṣafwān) says to you: 'I disbelieve in a Lord who moves from one place to another,' then say to him: 'I believe in a Lord who does whatever He wills'."

[al-Ibānah al-Kubrā: 159, Sharḥ Uṣūl I'tiqād Ahl al-Sunnah: 676]

• It was narrated from **Yazīd ibn Hārūn** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 206 AH):

وَرَوَى فِي مَجْلِسِهِ حَدِيثَ إِسْمَاعِيلَ ابْنِ أَبِي خَالِدٍ، عَنْ قَيْسِ بْنِ أَبِي حَازِمٍ، عَنْ جَرِيرِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ رَانَ عَنْهُ (ت: ٥١): فِي الرُّؤْيَةِ، وَقَوْلِ الرَّسُولِ ﷺ: "إِنَّكُمْ تَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى رَبِّكُمْ كَمَا تَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْقَمَرِ لَيْلَةَ الْبَدْرِ ، فَقَالَ رَجُلٌ فِي مَجْلِسِهِ: يَا أَبَا خَالِدٍ مَا مَعْنَى هَذَا الحَدِيثِ؟ فَغَضِبَ وَحَرِدَ ، وَقَالَ: وَيْلَكَ مَنْ يَدْرِي كَيْفَ هَذَا؟ وَمَنْ يَجُوزُ لَهُ أَنْ يُجَاوِزَ هَذَا القَوْلَ الَّذِي جَاءَ بِهِ الحَدِيثُ، أَو يَتَكَلَّمُ فِيهِ بِشَيْءٍ مِنْ تِلْقَاءِ نَفْسِهِ إِلَّا مَنْ سَفِهَ نَفْسَهُ، وَاسْتَخَفَّ بِدِينِهِ، إِذَا سَمِعْتُمْ الحَدِيثَ عَن رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ فَاتَّبِعُوهُ، وَلَا تَبْتَدِعُوا فِيهِ، فَإِنَّكُمْ إِنْ اتَّبَعْتُمُوهُ وَلَمْ تُمَارُوا فِيهِ سَلِمْتُمْ، وَإِنْ لَمْ تَفْعَلُوا هَلَكْتُمْ.

He narrated in his gathering the ḥadīth of Ismāʿīl ibn Abī Khālid, from Qays ibn Abī Ḥāzim, from Jarīr ibn ʿAbdullāh al-Bajalī (may Allah be pleased with him, d. 51 AH), regarding the seeing (of Allah), and the saying of the Messenger ﷺ: "Indeed, you will see your Lord just as you see the full moon on a clear night."[28] Then a man in the gathering said: "O Abā Khālid, what is the meaning of this ḥadīth?" So Yazīd became angry and withdrawn, and said: "Woe to you! Who knows how this is? And who is allowed to go beyond what has been stated in this ḥadīth, or to speak about it from his own self, except someone who has debased himself and made light of his religion? When you hear a ḥadīth from the Messenger of Allah

[28] Similarly in Ibn Mājah's Muqaddimah (Introduction to his Sunan), hadith number (177), and by Imām Aḥmad in his Musnad, hadith number (19190).

ﷺ, then follow it and do not innovate in it. For if you follow it and do not argue about it, you will be safe. But if you do not, you will perish."

[Aqīdat al-Salaf wa Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth, 236–237]

• **Abū ʿAbd Allāh ʿAmr ibn ʿUthmān al-Makkī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 291 AH) said:

اعْلَمْ - رَحِمَكَ الله- أَنَّ كُلَّ مَا تَوَهَّمَهُ قَلْبُكَ ، أَوْ رَسَخَ فِي مَجَارِي فِكْرَتِكَ، أَوْ خَطَرَ فِي مُعَارَضَاتِ قَلْبِكَ مِنْ حُسْنٍ، أَوْ بَهَاءٍ، أَوْ إِشْرَافٍ، أَوْ ضِيَاءٍ، أَوْ جَمَالٍ، أَوْ شَيْحٍ مَائِلٍ، أَوْ شَخْصٍ مُتَمَثِّلٍ، فَاللَّهُ بِخِلَافِ ذَلِكَ كُلِّهِ ، بَلْ هُوَ تَعَالَى أَعْظَمُ وَأَجَلُّ وَأَكْمَلُ، أَلَمْ تَسْمَعْ إِلَى قَوْلِهِ تَعَالَى: {لَيْسَ كَمِثْلِهِ شَيْءٌ} [الشورى: ١١]؟ وَقَوْلِهِ عَزَّوَجَلَّ : {وَلَمْ يَكُن لَّهُ كُفُوًا أَحَدٌ} [الإخلاص : ٤]؟ أَيْ: لَا شَبَهَ، وَلَا نَظِيرَ ، وَلَا مَسَاوِيَ، وَلَا مِثْلَ.

"Know—may Allah have mercy on you—that everything your heart imagines, or becomes fixed in the pathways of your thoughts, or crosses your inner reflections—whether of beauty, splendor, elevation, radiance, grace, a tilted figure, or a formed image—Allah is utterly unlike all of that. Rather, He—Exalted is He—is greater, more majestic, and more perfect. Have you not heard His saying, the Exalted: *{There is nothing like unto Him} [Surah al-Shūrā: 11]*, and His saying, Glorified and Exalted: *{And there is none comparable to Him} [Surah al-Ikhlāṣ: 4]*? That is: there is no resemblance, no equal, no match, and no likeness (to Him)."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah 3/392]

• **Abū Zurʿah al-Rāzī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 264 AH) said:

الأخبار التي عَنْ رَسُولِ اللهِ في الرؤية، وخلق آدم على صورته، والأحاديث التي في النزول، ونحو هذه الأخبار، المعتقد من هذه الأخبار مُراد النبي ﷺ، والتسليم بها، حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو مُوسَى الأنصاري رَحِمَهُ اللهُ قَالَ : قَالَ سفيان بن عيينة رَحِمَهُ اللهُ: ما وصف الله تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى به نفسه في كتابه فقراءته تفسيره، ليس لأحد أن يفسره إلا الله .

"The reports from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ—regarding the seeing (of Allah) and that Adam was created in His image, and the ḥadīths concerning [Allah's] descent, and similar narrations—the belief concerning these reports is that their intended meaning is what the Prophet ﷺ intended by them, and that we accept them as they are." He further said: Abū Mūsā al-Anṣārī (may Allah have mercy on him) narrated to me that Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah

(may Allah have mercy on him) said: "Whatever Allah the Blessed and Exalted described Himself with in His Book—its recitation is its explanation. No one is to explain it except Allah."

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah, 2/59]

• From **Abū al-Muẓaffar al-Samʿānī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 489 AH):

أنه سُئل عن أحاديث الصفات، فقال: عليكم بدين العجائز، ثم قال : غُصت في كل بحر، وانقطعت في كل بادية ، فوضعت رأسي على كل عتبة، ودخلت من كل باب، والله وصف خاص لا يعرفه غيره .

He was asked about the ḥadīths concerning the Divine Attributes (ṣifāt), so he replied: "Stick to the religion of the old women (i.e., the simple, unquestioning faith of the devout laypeople)." Then he said: "I have plunged into every sea, wandered through every desert, placed my head at every threshold, and entered through every door, yet [I realized that] Allah is of a unique nature that none truly knows except Him."[29]

[Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyyīn p.490]

• A debate occurred in Qayrawān regarding the disbelievers:

هل يعرفون الله أو لا؟ فوقع فيها تنازع عظيم بين العلماء، وتجاوز ذلك إلى العامة، وكثر التمادي بينهم فيها. فقال قائل : لو ذهبتم إلى الشيخ أبي عمران الفاسي رحمه الله لشفانا من هذه المسألة، فقام إليه أهل السوق بجماعتهم، حتى أتوا باب داره واستأذنوا عليه، فأذن لهم، فقالوا له: أصلحك الله، أنت تعلم أن العامة إذا حدثت بها حادثة إنما تفزع إلى علمائها، وهذه المسألة قد جرى فيها ما بلغك، وما لنا في الأسواق شغل إلا الكلام فيها. فقال لهم: لا يكلمني منكم إلا واحد، ويسمع الباقون، فقصد واحدا منهم فقال له: أرأيت لو لقيت رجلًا فقلت له: تعرف الشيخ أبا عمران، فقال: نعم فقلت: صفه لي، فقال: هو رجل يبيع البقل والحنطة والزيت في سوق ابن هشام ويسكن سبتة، أكان يعرفني ؟ فقال : لا . فقال: لو لقيت آخر فقلت:

[29] Al-Ḥāfiẓ Ibn Kathīr (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The methodology of Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Ismāʿīl al-Ashʿarī regarding the Divine Attributes—after he abandoned the beliefs of the Muʿtazilah, and even after he arrived in Baghdad and took from the scholars of ḥadīth such as Zakariyyā al-Sājī and others—is one of the soundest methodologies. He affirmed both the rational (ʿaqliyya) and textual (khabariyya) attributes, did not negate any of them, and did not attempt to define 'how' (i.e., anthropomorphize) any of them. This is the way of the Salaf and the imāms of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamāʿah. May Allah gather us in their company and cause us to die upon their path and in love of them. Indeed, He is the All-Hearing of supplications, the Most Generous. And upon this approach followed the imāms from among al-Ashʿarī's followers, such as Abū ʿAbdillāh ibn Mujāhid, al-Qāḍī Abū Bakr al-Bāqillānī, and others like them—may Allah have mercy on them. [Ṭabaqāt al-Shāfiʿiyyīn, 42/2–43].

تعرف الشيخ أبا عمران؟ فقال: نعم، فقلت: صفه لي، فقال: هو رجل يُدرس العلم ويدرسه، يفتي الناس، ويسكن بقرب السماط أكان يعرفني ؟ قال: نعم، قال: والأول ما كان يعرفني ؟ قال : لا . قال لهم الشيخ : كذلك الكافر ، إذا قال : إن لمعبوده صاحبة، وولدا، وأنه جسم، وقصد بعبادته من هذه صفته فلم يعرف الله، ولم يصفه بصفاته، ولم يقصد بالعبادة إلا من هذه صفته، وهو بخلاف المؤمن الذي يقول إن معبوده الله، الأحد، الذي لم يلد ولم يولد، ولم يكن له كفوا أحد، فهذا قد عرف الله، ووصف بصفته، وقصد بعبادته من يستحق الربوبية سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَى عما يقول الظالمون علوا كبيرا. فقامت الجماعة وقالوا له: جزاك الله خيرًا من عالم، فقد شفيت ما بنفوسنا، ودعوا له، ولم يخوضوا في المسألة بعد هذا.

Do they (the disbelievers) know Allah or not? A great dispute broke out among the scholars, which even spread to the common people, and the argument among them became intense. Someone said: “Why don’t you go to **Shaykh Abū ʿImrān al-Fāsī** (may Allah have mercy on him)? He could resolve this issue for us." So the people of the marketplace gathered and went to his house. They sought permission to enter, and he granted it. They said to him: “May Allah rectify your condition! You know that when calamities or difficult issues arise, the general public turns to their scholars. This issue has become widespread, as you may have heard, and we in the markets have no topic other than this.” He said to them: “Let only one of you speak to me, and the rest should listen.” So one of them stepped forward. The shaykh said to him: “Suppose you met a man and asked him, ‘Do you know Shaykh Abū ʿImrān?’ and he said, ‘Yes.’ Then you said to him, ‘Describe him to me,’ and he replied, ‘He is a man who sells vegetables, wheat, and oil in the Sūq Ibn Hishām and lives in Sabta (Ceuta).’ Would you say that this man knows me?” The man replied: “No.” Then the shaykh said: “Now, suppose you met another person and asked him, ‘Do you know Shaykh Abū ʿImrān?’ and he said, ‘Yes,’ and when you asked him to describe me, he said, “He is a man who teaches knowledge and gives religious verdicts, and lives near the Simaṭ (a well-known location).” Would you say that this person knows me?” The man replied: “Yes.” The shaykh said: “And the first one, he did not know me?” The man said: “Correct.” Then the shaykh said: “This is how the disbeliever is. If he says that his “God” has a wife and a child, and that ‘God’ is a body, and he directs his worship to one with such attributes then he does not know Allah. He has not described Him with His true attributes, and his worship is not directed to the One truly deserving of worship. In contrast, the believer says: ‘My deity is Allah, the One, the Eternal, the One who begets not, nor is begotten, and there is none comparable to Him.’ Such a person has recognized Allah, described Him with His true attributes, and directed his worship to the One who truly deserves Lordship, Exalted is He above what the wrongdoers say, by great exaltation.” So the group stood up and said to him: “May Allah reward you with goodness, O scholar! You have healed what was in our hearts.” They prayed for him and did not debate the issue any further.

[Tartīb al-Madārik 4/261–262]

• The minister Ibn Hubayrah (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 560), said:

تفكَّرْتُ في أخبار الصفات فرأيت الصحابة رضي الله عنهم والتابعين رحمهم الله سكتوا عن تفسيرها، مع قوة علمهم، فنظرت السبب في سكوتهم فإذا هو قوة الهيبة للموصوف، ولأن تفسيرها لا يتأتى إلا بضرب الأمثال لله، وقد قال عَزَّوَجَلَّ : {فَلَا تَضْرِبُوا لِلَّهِ الْأَمْثَالَ} [النحل: ٧٤].

"I reflected upon the reports concerning the attributes, and I saw that the Companions, may Allah be pleased with them, and the Tabi'in, may Allah have mercy on them, remained silent regarding their explanation, despite the strength of their knowledge. So I examined the reason for their silence, and found that it was due to the profound awe of the One being described, and because explaining them can only be done by drawing likenesses for Allah, and Allah, Mighty and Majestic, said: *"So do not set up comparisons for Allah" [al-Nahl: 74]*."

[Dhail al-Tabaqat 2/155]

Stance of Salaf regarding Takfir, Tabdī' and Tafsīq[30]:[31]

• It was said to **Abū Wāʾil Shaqīq ibn Salamah al-Asadī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 82 AH):

يَا أَبَا وَائِلٍ أَيُّ شَيْءٍ تَشْهَدُ عَلَى الْحَجَّاجِ؟ تَشْهَدُ أَنَّهُ فِي النَّارِ؟ فقال: سبحان الله! أَتَأْمُرُنِي أَنْ أَحْكُمَ عَلَى اللهِ!

"O Abā Wāʾil, what do you testify regarding al-Ḥajjāj? Do you testify that he is in the Fire?" He replied: "Glory be to Allah! Do you command me to pass judgment upon Allah?!"

[Ṭabaqāt by Ibn Saʿd 8/219]

• **Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq ibn Khuzaymah** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 311 AH) said:

مَنْ لَمْ يُقِرَّ بِأَنَّ اللهَ تَعَالَى عَلَى عَرْشِهِ قَدِ اسْتَوَى فَوْقَ سَبْعِ سَمَاوَاتِهِ، فَهُوَ كَافِرٌ بِرَبِّهِ، يُسْتَتَابُ، فَإِنْ تَابَ وَإِلَّا ضُرِبَتْ عُنُقُهُ، وَأُلْقِيَ عَلَى بَعْضِ الْمَزَابِلِ؛ حَيْثُ لَا يَتَأَذَّى الْمُسْلِمُونَ وَالْمُعَاهَدُونَ بِنَتْنِ رِيحِ جِيفَتِهِ ، وَكَانَ مَالُهُ فَيْئًا، لَا يَرِثُهُ أَحَدٌ مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِينَ، إِذِ الْمُسْلِمُ لَا يَرِثُ الْكَافِرَ كَمَا قَالَ ﷺ.

"Whoever does not affirm that Allah, Exalted is He, is above His Throne, having risen (istiwa) above His seven heavens, then he is a disbeliever in his Lord. He is to be called to repent if he repents, but if not, his neck is to be struck (i.e., executed), and he is to be cast onto one of the garbage heaps, in a place where neither the Muslims nor the dhimmīs

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[30] Takfir - Declaring someone a Kafir (disbeliever); Tabdī' - Declaring someone Mubtadi' (innovator); Tafsīq: Declaring someone Fāsiq (Evil doer).

[31] This matter is great and dangerous. Whoever enters into it without being qualified, and without having knowledge and fairness, goes astray and leads others astray, and causes corruption. It is not permissible to speak on it except for the senior scholars among the verified people of knowledge, those who are the most knowledgeable of the truth and the most merciful to the creation. The conditions must be fulfilled, and the preventives must be absent. The conditions are: knowledge, intention, and choice. Its preventives are their opposites: ignorance, misinterpretation, lack of intention, and coercion. And this (i.e., a ruling) cannot be applied except after the proof has been established against the person. Not everyone who falls into disbelief has disbelief fall upon him, and likewise with innovation and sinfulness. So, one must be cautious in this matter and seek safety. Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said in Majmūʿ al-Fatāwā (12/180): "Takfīr (declaring someone a disbeliever) differs according to the differing states of the individual. Not every mistaken person, or innovator, or ignorant one, or misled one is a disbeliever, nor even a fāsiq (sinner), nor even a disobedient one."

(non-Muslim subjects under Muslim protection) are harmed by the stench of his corpse. His wealth is [taken] as fay' (spoils for the Muslims), and no Muslim inherits from him, for a Muslim does not inherit from a disbeliever as the Prophet ﷺ has stated[32]. "

[Maʿrifat ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth, 300]

Al-Dhahabī (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 748 AH) commented on Ibn Khuzaymah's statement:

مَنْ أَقَرَّ بِذَلِكَ تَصْدِيقًا لِكِتَابِ اللهِ ، وَلأَحَادِيْثِ رَسُوْلِ اللهِ ﷺ وَآمَنَ بِهِ مُفَوِّضًا مَعْنَاهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ وَرَسُوْلِهِ، وَلَمْ يَخْضُ فِي التَّأْوِيلِ وَلَا عَمَّقَ فَهُوَ المُسْلِمُ المُتَّبِعُ، وَمَنْ أَنْكَرَ ذَلِكَ فَلَمْ يَدْرِ بِثُبُوتِ ذَلِكَ فِي الْكِتَابِ وَالسُّنَّةِ فَهُوَ مُقَصِّرٌ وَاللهِ يَعْفُو عَنْهُ ، إِذْ لَمْ يُوجِبِ اللَّهُ . اللَّهُ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ حِفْظُ مَا وَرَدَ فِي ذَلِكَ ، وَمَنْ أَنكَرَ ذَلِكَ بَعْدَ العِلْمِ وَقَفَا غَيْرَ سَبِيلِ السَّلَفِ الصَّالِحِ وَتَمَعْقَلَ عَلَى النَّصِّ فَأَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللهِ ، نَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الضَّلَالِ وَالهَوَى. وَكَلَامُ ابْنِ خُزَيْمَةَ هَذَا - وَإِنْ كَانَ حَقًّا - فَهُوَ فَجٌّ، لَا تَحْتَمِلُهُ نُفُوْسُ كَثِيرٍ مِنْ مُتَأَخِّرِي العُلَمَاءِ... ، وَلا بْنِ خُزَيْمَةَ عَظَمَةٌ فِي النُّفُوسِ، وَجَلَالَةٌ فِي القُلُوْبِ؛ لِعِلمِهِ وَدِينِهِ وَاتِّبَاعِهِ السُّنَّةَ.

"Whoever affirms that, believing in it as a confirmation of the Book of Allah and the ḥadīths of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ , and believes in it while leaving the (description of the) meaning of it to Allah and His Messenger, without engaging in Ta'weel [Taking a meaning apart from the apparent meaning] or delving deeply into its explanation, then he is a following Muslim. And whoever denies that due to not knowing that it is established in the Book and the Sunnah, then he is falling short, and Allah may pardon him, for Allah has not obligated every Muslim to preserve and comprehend everything reported in that regard. But whoever denies it after knowledge and follows a path other than that of the righteous predecessors, and clings stubbornly to the text (in rejection), then his matter is with Allah. We seek refuge in Allah from misguidance and desires. And the statement of Ibn Khuzaymah. though it is true, is harsh, and many of the later scholars' souls cannot bear it… Nonetheless, Ibn Khuzaymah holds great status in people's hearts and a lofty position due to his knowledge, his piety, and his adherence to the Sunnah."

[Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ 14/373–374]

• **Abū al-'Abbās al-Sarrāj** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 313 AH) said:

مَنْ لَمْ يُقِرَّ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ تَعَالَ - يَعْجَبُ، وَيَضْحَكُ، وَيَنْزِلُ كُلَّ لَيْلَةٍ إِلَى السَّمَاءِ الدُّنْيَا، فَيَقُوْلُ: "مَنْ يَسْأَلُنِي فَأُعْطِيَهُ" : فَهُوَ زِنْدِيْقٌ

[32] Agreed upon (i.e., narrated by both al-Bukhārī and Muslim): Al-Bukhārī (6764), Muslim (1614), wording from Muslim, from the hadith of Usāmah ibn Zayd (may Allah be pleased with him): The Prophet ﷺ said: "A Muslim does not inherit from a disbeliever, and a disbeliever does not inherit from a Muslim."

كَافِرٌ يُسْتَتَابُ، فَإِنْ تَابَ وَإِلا ضُرِبَتْ عُنُقُه ، وَلَا يُصَلَّى عَلَيْهِ، وَلَا يُدْفَنُ فِي مَقَابِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ.

"Whoever does not affirm that Allah the Exalted, is amazed[33], laughs[34], and descends every night to the lowest heaven and says: 'Who will ask Me so that I may give him?[35]', then he is a heretic (zindīq), a disbeliever (kāfir), who must be asked to repent. If he repents, (he is accepted), but if not, his neck is to be struck (i.e., he is to be executed). He is not to be prayed over, nor buried in the Muslim graveyards."

Al-Dhahabī (may Allah have mercy on him) said, commenting on his words:

لا يُكَفِّرُ إِلَّا إِنْ عَلِمَ أَنَّ الرَّسُولَ ﷺ قَالَهُ، فَإِنْ جَحَدَ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فَهَذَا مُعَانِدٌ - نَسْأَلُ اللهَ الهُدَى - وَإِنِ اعْتَرَفَ أَنَّ هَذَا حَقٌّ، وَلَكِنْ لا أَخُوضُ فِي مَعَانِيهِ، فَقَدْ أَحْسَنَ، وَإِنْ آمَنَ وَأَوَّلَ ذَلِكَ كُلَّهُ، أَوْ تَأَوَّلَ بَعْضَهُ، فَهُوَ طَرِيقَةٌ مَعْرُوْفَةٌ.

"One is not to be declared a disbeliever (kāfir) unless he knows that the Messenger ﷺ actually said it, and then denies it, in that case, he is an opponent (muʿāyid), we ask Allah for guidance. But if he acknowledges that this is true, yet says, 'I do not delve into its meanings,' then he has done well. And if he believes in it but does ta'weel of all of it, or part

[33] Among them is what al-Bukhārī narrated in his Ṣaḥīḥ (3010), from the hadith of Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him), from the Prophet ﷺ: "Allah is amazed at a people who will enter Paradise in chains."

[34] Among them is what al-Bukhārī narrated in his Ṣaḥīḥ (3798): It is the story of the Anṣārī man who hosted a hungry guest, while food in the house was scarce. He offered all the food to the guest, and he, his wife, and children remained hungry. In the morning, he went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, who said: "Allah laughed last night, or was amazed at what you two did." Then Allah revealed the verse: *{They give [others] preference over themselves, even though they are in need. And whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul, then it is they who will be successful} [Al-Ḥashr: 9]*."

[35] Agreed upon: Al-Bukhārī: (1145, 7494), Muslim: (758): from hadith of Abū Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him).

of it, then this is a well-known approach."[36]

[Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ 14/396–397]

• And he (al-Dhahabī), may Allah have mercy on him, said:

رَأَيْتُ لِلأَشعرِيّ كَلِمَةً أَعجِبَتَنِي، وَهِيَ ثَابِتَةٌ رَوَاهَا البَيْهَقِي رَحِمَهُ اللهُ (ت: ٤٥٨) : قَالَ : سَمِعْتُ أَبَا حَازِمٍ عُمَرَ بْنَ أَحْمَدَ الْعَبْدَوِيَّ الْحَافِظَ يَقُولُ : سَمِعْتُ زَاهِرَ بْنَ أَحْمَدَ السَّرَخْسِيَّ يَقُولُ : لَمَّا قَرُبَ حَضُورُ أَجَلِ أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الأَشْعَرِي رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (ت: ٣٢٤) فِي دَارِي بِبَغْدَادَ دَعَانِي فَقَالَ: اشْهَدْ عَلَيَّ أَنِّي لَا أُكَفِّرُ أَحَدًا مِنْ أَهْلِ هَذِهِ القِبْلَةِ؛ لِأَنَّ الْكَلَّ يُشِيرُونَ إِلَى مَعْبُودٍ وَاحِدٍ، وَإِنَّمَا هَذَا اخْتِلَافُ الْعِبَارَاتِ.

"I saw a statement from al-Ashʿarī that I liked, and it is authentically transmitted, reported by al-Bayhaqī (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 458 AH): He said: I heard Abū Ḥāzim ʿUmar ibn Aḥmad al-ʿAbdawī, the ḥāfiẓ, say: I heard Zāhir ibn Aḥmad al-Sarakhsī say: 'When the death of **Abū al-Ḥasan al-Ashʿarī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 324 AH) approached, while he was in my house in Baghdad, he called me and said: Bear witness that I do not declare any of the people of this qiblah to be disbelievers, for all of them point to one object of worship. The differences are only in expressions (wording)'."

And he (al-Dhahabī), may Allah have mercy on him, said:

وَبنحو هَذَا أَدين ، وَكَذَا كَانَ شَيْخُنَا ابْنُ تيمِيَّةِ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ (ت: ٧٢٨) فِي أَوَاخِرِ أَيَّامه يَقُوْلُ : أَنَا لاَ أُكفّر أَحَدًا مِنَ الأُمَّةِ.

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[36] [Translator's addition]: It is incorrect to claim that Imām al-Dhahabī was a mufawwiḍ (one who consigned the meanings of the attributes to Allah) or that he approved of ta'wīl (figurative reinterpretation), as some have suggested based on selective readings. In fact, his clear and repeated statements show his commitment to the way of the Salaf in affirming the attributes of Allah by taking the apparent meaning, without ta'wīl, taʿṭīl, or tashbīh. Imām al-Dhahabī said: "What is obligatory is to carry them upon their apparent meaning (ẓāhir), and that they are attributes of Allah, Exalted is He, which do not resemble the attributes of the created beings. What indicates the invalidity of re-interpretation (ta'wīl) is that the Companions and those after them carried these texts upon their apparent meaning and did not engage in re-interpreting them nor divert them from their apparent sense. Had ta'wīl been permissible, they would have been the first to adopt it—given that it supposedly removes the aspect of anthropomorphism (tashbīh), according to those who claim that the apparent meaning implies anthropomorphism." [Al-ʿUlūw, p. 263]
With regards to Tafwīd, he explicitly criticizes the later speculative theologians on their belief of Tafwīd Al-Ma'na, saying: "The latter ones from the speculative theologians invented a new belief which I do not know of anyone preceding them in that. They said: These attributes are passed on as they have come and not interpreted, while believing that the apparent meaning is not intended". [Al-ʿUlūw, p. 263].
These statements confirm that al-Dhahabī followed the Atharī creed of affirming Allah's attributes as they are, without delving into how (takyīf), nor rejecting their apparent Arabic meanings, thus opposing both ta'wīl and tafwīḍ al-maʿnā.

"And upon this (i.e., the previously mentioned stance of al-Ashʿarī), I hold my creed. And likewise was our Shaykh, **Ibn Taymiyyah** (may Allah have mercy on him, d. 728 AH), in the last of his days, he used to say: 'I do not declare anyone from the Ummah to be a disbeliever (kāfir).'

وَيَقُولُ: قَالَ النَّبِيُّ ﷺ: «لا يُحَافِظُ عَلى الوضوء إلا مُؤْمِنٌ » ، فَمَنْ لاَزَمَ الصَّلَوَاتِ بوضوءٍ فَهُوَ مُسْلِم

And he (Ibn Taymiyyah) would say: 'The Prophet ﷺ said: "No one maintains ablution except a believer."[37] So, whoever regularly performs the prayers with ablution is a Muslim'[38]."

[Tahdhīb al-Siyar, 3/1174]

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[37] It was recorded by Ibn Mājah in his Sunan (hadith numbers 277, 278, 279), from the narrations of Thawbān, ʿAbdullāh ibn ʿAmr, and Abū Umāmah (may Allah be pleased with them). And the hadith was authenticated by the eminent scholar and hadith expert, Shaykh al-Albānī (may Allah have mercy on him), and others.

[38] Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "It is authentically established in the Ṣaḥīḥayn from the Prophet ﷺ regarding the man who said: "When I die, burn me, then crush me, then scatter me into the sea. For by Allah, if Allah is able over me, He will punish me with a punishment that He has not punished anyone else in all the worlds." Then Allah said to him: "What made you do that?" He replied: "Fear of You." So Allah forgave him. This man believed that Allah would not be able to gather him if he did that, or he doubted that He could, and he did not believe he would be resurrected. Both of these beliefs are disbelief (kufr)—whoever knowingly holds them after the proof has been established upon him is a disbeliever. But this man was ignorant, and knowledge of what would refute his ignorance had not reached him. At the same time, he had faith in Allah, in His command and prohibition, in His promise and warning, and he feared His punishment. So Allah forgave him because of that fear. So whoever makes a mistake in some issues of belief (ʿaqīdah)—while he has faith in Allah, in His Messenger, in the Last Day, and does righteous deeds—is not in a worse state than that man, and Allah may forgive his mistake, or punish him if there was negligence in seeking the truth, depending on the strength of his religion. But as for declaring a specific individual (muʿayyan) to be a disbeliever when his faith is known, merely because of a mistake in such matters—that is a grave matter. It is authentically reported in the Ṣaḥīḥ from Thābit ibn al-Ḍaḥḥāk that the Prophet ﷺ said: "Cursing a believer is like killing him; and whoever accuses a believer of disbelief, it is like killing him." And it is authentically reported that the Prophet ﷺ said: "If someone says to his brother: 'O disbeliever (kāfir),' it returns upon one of them." So if declaring someone a disbeliever (takfīr al-muʿayyan) as a form of insult is like killing him, then how severe is takfīr made as a religious judgment? That is even more severe, for every disbeliever is permissible to be killed, but not everyone who is permissible to be killed is necessarily a disbeliever. A person may be killed—like one who calls to innovation and leads people astray and corrupts them—even though Allah may forgive him in the Hereafter due to the faith he holds. For it is massively and repeatedly confirmed in the revealed texts that those who have even a mustard seed of faith in their hearts will be brought out of the Fire." [Al-Istiqāmah p.135-136].

• He (al-Dhahabī), may Allah have mercy on him, said:

كَمَا كَانَ جَمَاعَةٌ فِي أَيَّامِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ مُنتَسبُوْنَ إِلَى صُحْبَتِهِ وَإِلَى ملَّتِهِ، وَهُم فِي البَاطِنِ مِنْ مَرَدَةِ المُنَافِقِينَ، قَدْ لَا يَعْرِفُهُم نَبِيُّ اللَّهِ ﷺ وَلَا يَعْلَمُ بهم. قَالَ الله تَعَالَى -: {وَمِنْ أَهْلِ الْمَدِينَةِ مَرَدُوا عَلَى النِّفَاقِ لَا تَعْلَمُهُمْ نَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُمْ سَنُعَذِّبُهُم مَرَّتَيْنِ} [التَّوبَةُ : ١٠١) ، فَإِذَا جَازَ عَلَى سَيِّدِ البشرِ أَنْ لَا يَعْلَمَ بِبَعْضِ المُنَافِقِينَ، وَهُم مَعَهُ فِي المَدِينَةِ سنواتٍ، فَبِالأَوْلَى: أَنْ يَخْفَى حَالُ جَمَاعَةٍ مِنَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ الفَارِغِينَ عَنْ دِينِ الإِسْلَامِ بَعْدَهُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَلَى العُلَمَاءِ مِنْ أُمَّتِهِ . فَمَا يَنْبَغِي لَكَ يَا فَقِيهُ أَنْ تُبَادِرَ إِلَى تكفير المُسْلِمِ إِلَّا بِبُرْهَانٍ قَطَعِيٍّ، كَمَا لا يسوغُ لَكَ أَن تعتقد العِرفَانَ وَالوِلايَةَ فِيمَنْ قَدْ تَبْرهِنَ زَغَلُهُ، وَانْهَتَكَ بَاطِنُهُ وَزَنْدَقَتُهُ، فَلَا هَذَا وَلَا هَذَا، بَلِ العَدلُ : أَنَّ مَنْ رَآهُ المُسْلِمُوْنَ صَالِحًا مُحسِنًا، فَهُوَ كَذَلِكَ، لأَنَّهُم شهداءُ اللهِ فِي أَرضِهِ، إِذِ الأُمَّةُ لا تَجْتَمِعُ عَلَى ضَلَالَةٍ ، وَأَنَّ مَنْ رَآهُ المُسْلِمُوْنَ فَاجِرًا أَوْ مُنَافِقًا أَوْ مُبْطِلًا، فَهُوَ كَذَلِكَ، وَأَنَّ مَنْ كَانَ طَائِفَةٌ مِنَ الْأُمَّةِ تُضَلِّلُه، وَطَائِفَةٌ مِنَ الأُمَّةِ تُثْنِي عَلَيْهِ وَتبجِّلُهُ ، وَطَائِفَةٌ ثَالِثَةٌ تَقِفُ فِيْهِ وَتَتَورَّعُ مِنَ الحط عَلَيْهِ، فَهُوَ مِمَّنْ يَنْبَغِي أَنْ يُعْرَضَ عَنْهُ، وَأَنْ يفوَّضَ أَمْرُهُ إِلَى اللَّهِ، وَأَنْ يُسْتَغْفَرَ لَهُ فِي الجُمْلَةِ ؛ لأَنَّ إِسْلامَهُ أَصْلي بيقين، وضلاله مشكوك فِيهِ، فَبِهَذَا تَسْتَرِيحُ، وَيَصفُو قَلْبُكَ مِنَ الغِلِّ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ. ثُمَّ اعْلَمْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ القِبْلَةِ كُلَّهُم ، مُؤْمِنَهُم وَفَاسِقَهُم، وَسُنْيَهُم وَمُبْتَدِعَهُم - سِوَى الصَّحَابَةِ - لَمْ يُجْمَعُوا عَلَى مُسْلِمٍ بِأَنَّهُ سَعِيدٌ نَاجٍ، وَلَمْ يُجْمَعُوا عَلَى مُسْلِمٍ بِأَنَّهُ شَقِيٌّ هَالِكٌ، فَهَذَا الصِّدِّيقُ فردُ الأُمَّةِ، قَدْ عَلَمْتَ تَفَرُّقَهُم فِيْهِ، وَكَذَلِكَ عُمَرُ، وَكَذَلِكَ عُثْمَانُ، وَكَذَلِكَ عَلِيٌّ، وَكَذَلِكَ ابْنُ الزُّبَيْرِ، وَكَذَلِكَ الحَجَّاجُ، وَكَذَلِكَ المَأْمُونُ، وَكَذَلِكَ بَشْرُ المَرِيسِيُّ، وَكَذَلِكَ أَحْمَدُ بنُ حَنْبَلٍ، وَالشَّافِعِيُّ، وَالبُخَارِيُّ، وَالنَّسَائِيُّ، وَهَلُمَّ جَرًّا مِنَ الأَعْيَانِ فِي الخَيْرِ وَالشَّرِّ إِلَى يَوْمِكَ هَذَا، فَمَا مِنْ إِمَامٍ كَامِلٍ فِي الخَيْرِ، إِلَّا وَثَمَّ أُنَاسٌ مِنْ جَهَلَةِ المُسْلِمِينَ وَمُبْتَدِعِيهِم يَذُمُّونه، وَيَحطُّونَ عَلَيْهِ، وَمَا مِنْ رَأْسٍ فِي البدعَةِ وَالتَّجَهُمِ وَالرَّضِ إِلَّا وَلَهُ أُنَاسٌ يَنْتَصِرُوْنَ لَهُ، وَيَذُبُّونَ عَنْهُ، وَيَدِينُوْنَ بِقَولِهِ بِهَوَى وَجَهلٍ، وَإِنَّمَا العِبْرَةُ بِقَولِ جُمْهُورِ الْأُمَّةِ الخَالِينَ مِنَ الهوَى وَالجَهْلِ المُتَّصِفِينَ بِالوَرَعِ وَالعِلْمِ.

"Just as there were groups during the time of the Prophet ﷺ who claimed to be among his companions and followers of his religion, while inwardly they were among the most stubborn of the hypocrites, and the Prophet ﷺ did not know them, nor was he aware of them, as Allah the Exalted said: *{And among the people of Madinah are those who persist in hypocrisy, They are not known to you ˹O Prophet˺; they are known to Us . We will punish them twice…} [al-Tawbah, 9:101]* Then if it was possible for the Master of all creation ﷺ to not know the state of some hypocrites, even though they lived with him in Madinah for years, then all the more so is it likely that the condition of certain hypocrites who are empty of true Islam, would be hidden from the scholars of his Ummah after him. So, O jurist, it is not appropriate for you to rush to declare a Muslim a disbeliever (takfīr) except with clear, decisive evidence. Just as it is not proper for you to affirm divine knowledge (ʿirfān) and sainthood (wilāyah) for someone whose inner corruption and heresy (zandaqah) have been exposed and proven. So neither this nor that. Rather, justice is: Whoever the Muslims see as righteous and virtuous, then he is as they see him, for they are Allah's witnesses on earth[39],

[39] Agreed upon: Al-Bukhārī: (1367, 2642), Muslim: (949), from the hadith of Anas ibn Mālik (may Allah be pleased with him).

and the Ummah does not agree upon misguidance[40]. And whoever the Muslims see as corrupt, hypocritical, or false, then he is as they see him. As for someone about whom one group of the Ummah considers misguided, and another group praises and venerates him, and a third group remains cautious, withholding judgment and avoiding attacking him, then such a person should be left alone, and his matter referred to Allah. – And general forgiveness should be sought for him, because his Islam is certain, while his misguidance is doubtful. With this, your heart will find peace, and you will be free from harboring rancor toward the believers. Then know that all the people of the Qiblah, the righteous among them and the sinners, the Sunnis and the innovators, except the Companions, have never unanimously agreed upon any individual Muslim that he is certainly saved and destined for happiness, nor have they unanimously agreed upon any Muslim that he is doomed and ruined. This is Abu Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, the unique man of this Ummah, yet you know how people have differed concerning him. And likewise ʿUmar, and likewise ʿUthmān, and likewise ʿAlī, and likewise Ibn al-Zubayr, and likewise al-Ḥajjāj, and likewise al-Maʾmūn, and likewise Bishr al-Marīsī, and likewise Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal, al-Shāfiʿī, al-Bukhārī, al-Nasāʾī and so on among the notable figures, whether in goodness or in evil, down to this very day. There has never been any great imām known for righteousness and good, except that there are some ignorant Muslims and some innovators who criticize and revile him. And there is no leader in innovation (*bidʿah*), or in *tajahhum* (the Jahmi creed), or in heresy (*al-raḍ*), except that he has people who defend him, support him, and follow his views out of desire and ignorance. The true criterion is the view of the majority of the Ummah who are free from desire and ignorance, and who are characterized by piety and knowledge."

[Tahdhīb al-Siyar 3/1158–1159]

[40] The hadith: "My ummah will not agree upon misguidance." Narrated by al-Tirmidhī (2167), al-Ḥākim (1/115), Abū Dāwūd (4253), and Aḥmad in his Musnad (6/397). Shaykh al-Albānī (may Allah have mercy on him) authenticated it in al-Silsilah al-Ṣaḥīḥah (1331).

• Al-Dhahabi (may Allah have mercy on him) also said:

وَلَوْ أَنَّ كُلَّ مَنْ أَخْطَأَ فِي اجْتِهَادِهِ - مَعَ صِحَّةِ إِيْمَانِهِ، وَتَوَفِّيْهِ لا تُبَاعِ الحَقِّ - أَهْدَرْنَاهُ ، وَبَدَّعْنَاهُ ، لَقَلَّ مَنْ يَسْلَمُ مِنَ الأَئِمَّةِ مَعَنَا، رَحِمَ اللَّهُ الجَمِيعَ بِمَنْهِ وَكَرَمِهِ.

"If we were to reject and declare as innovators everyone who made a mistake in their ijtihād (independent reasoning), despite the soundness of their faith and their diligence in following the truth, then very few of the Imams would be safe from being condemned by us. May Allah have mercy on them all by His grace and generosity."[41]

[Tahdhīb al-Siyar, 3/1162]

[41] This statement is worthy of being written in gold, and the following points can be derived from it:
[1] That every Muslim who outwardly appears righteous, and about whom scholars and people differ, some praising him and others criticizing him, should not be spoken about hastily; rather, a person should exercise caution and refrain from speaking ill of him.
[2] The evidence for withholding judgment against him is: "His Islam is certain, while his misguidance is doubtful."
The default assumption is that he is a righteous Muslim, and nothing to the contrary should be asserted except with clear proof.
[3] One of the fruits of withholding judgment is that it brings peace and purity to the heart from resentment toward the believers. This is clear, as the most bitter and disturbed of people are those who constantly speak ill of others, so how much worse when that backbiting targets the scholars and preachers who have left a good impact on the Ummah?
[4] No one is safe from criticism, even the Companions and others were criticized and spoken against. So the criticism of someone against a preacher or righteous individual is not, by itself, a valid reason to discredit him.
[5] The true criterion in warning against someone is the statement of the majority of the Ummah, those who are free from personal desires and ignorance, and who are known for their piety and knowledge.

Stance of Salaf towards the Companions, and mention of their rank and status[42]:

- **Ibn ʿUmar** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 73 AH) said:

لَا تَسُبُّوا أَصْحَابَ مُحَمَّدٍ، فَلَمَقَامُ أَحَدِهِمْ سَاعَةً خَيْرٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ أَحَدِكُمْ عُمْرَهُ.

"Do not revile the companions of Muhammad ﷺ, for the standing of any one of them for even an hour is better than the lifetime of deeds of any one of you."

[Faḍāʾil al-Ṣaḥābah by Imam Aḥmad: 15, graded as ḥasan by al-Albānī]

- **ʿĀ'ishah** (may Allah be pleased with her) (d. 58 AH) said:

والله ما احتقرت أعمال أصحاب رسول الله ﷺ حتى نجم القراء الذين طعنوا على عثمان، فقالوا قولا لا تحسن مثله، وقرأوا قراءة لا تقرأ مثلها ، وصلوا صلاةً لا تُصَلِّي مثلها. فأما والله ما يقاربون أصحاب رسول الله ، فإذا أعجبك حسن قول امرئ فقل :{اعْمَلُوا فَسَيَرَى اللَّهُ عَمَلَكُمْ وَرَسُولُهُ، وَالْمُؤْمِنُونَ}.

"By Allah, I never belittled the deeds of the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ until the Qur'ān reciters emerged[43] those who criticized ʿUthmān. They spoke words you

[42] Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on him) said: The point is that no one who came after them (i.e., the Companions) can equal them in their opinions. And how could they be equal— when it happened that one of them would hold an opinion, and then the Qur'an would be revealed in agreement with it? For example, 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) held the opinion that the captives of Badr should be executed, and the Qur'an was revealed in agreement with him. And he saw that the wives of the Prophet ﷺ should be veiled, and the Qur'an was revealed in agreement with him. And he saw that the Maqām of Ibrāhīm should be taken as a place of prayer, and the Qur'an was revealed in agreement with him... And when the Prophet ﷺ appointed Sa'd ibn Mu'ādh as a judge regarding Banū Qurayẓah, Sa'd said: "I see that their fighting men should be killed, their women and children taken as captives, and their wealth divided as spoils." The Prophet ﷺ said: "You have judged among them with the judgment of Allah from above seven heavens." It is only right that the opinions of people of such rank be better for us than our own opinions are for ourselves. And how could it be otherwise—when their opinions sprang from hearts filled with light and faith, with wisdom, knowledge, understanding of Allah and His Messenger, and sincerity towards the Ummah? Their hearts were aligned with the heart of their Prophet, and there was no intermediary between them and him. They transmitted knowledge and faith fresh and pure from the lamp of prophethood—untouched by confusion, free of contradiction, unsoiled by opposition. So comparing anyone else's opinion to theirs is among the most corrupt forms of analogy. [I'lām al-Muwaqqi'īn, 1/82–83].

[43] It refers to the Khawārij, those who rebelled against 'Uthmān (may Allah be pleased with him). They were people who used to do much recitation of the Qur'an, prayer, and fasting, as the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said about them: "One of you would consider his prayer insignificant compared to their prayer, and his fasting compared to

could not speak like, and they recited a recitation you could not recite like, and they prayed a prayer you could not pray like. But by Allah, they do not come close to the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. So if the eloquence of a man impresses you, then say: *{Do [as you will], for Allah will see your deeds, and [so will] His Messenger and the believers.} [Surah At-Tawbah: 105].*

[Az-Zuhd by Abū Dāwūd: 279]

• ʿ**Abdullāh ibn Masʿūd** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 32 AH) said:

لا يزال الناس بخير ما أتاهم العلم من قبل أصحاب محمد الله وأكابرهم، فإذا أتاهم العلم من قبل أصاغرهم فذلك حين هلكوا.

"The people will remain upon goodness as long as knowledge comes to them from the companions of Muhammad ﷺ and their elders. But when knowledge comes to them from their *Sagha'ir* (those not firm in knowledge), that is the time they will be destroyed."

[Az-Zuhd by Ibn al-Mubārak: 764]

• From **Al-Miqdād ibn Maʿdī Karib** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 90 AH):

دخل المسجد ورأى الناس يصلون التطوع في المسجد، فقال: صلاة كصلاة الملائكة، والله لأنتم أكثر صلاة منا، ولنحن كنا خيرا منكم.

He once entered the mosque and saw people praying voluntary (nafl) prayers in the mosque. He said: "A prayer like the prayer of the angels! By Allah, you pray more than we did, but by Allah, we (companions) were better than you."

[Az-Zuhd by Abū Dāwūd: 336]

• **Abū ʿAnabah al-Khawlānī** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 90 AH) said:

ألا أخبركم عن خلال كان عليها إخوانكم : أولها: لقاء الله كان أحب إليهم من الشهد. والثانية: لم يكونوا يخافون عدوا قلوا أو كثروا. والثالثة: لم يكونوا يخافون عوزًا من الدنيا، كانوا واثقين بالله أن يرزقهم. والرابعة: إن نزل بهم الطاعون لم يبرحوا حتى يقضي الله فيهم ما قضى.

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their fasting. They recite the Qur'an, but it does not go beyond their throats. They pass through the religion just as an arrow passes through the target."

"Shall I not inform you of the qualities upon which your brothers (i.e. Companions) were? The first: Meeting Allah was more beloved to them than honey. The second: They did not fear any enemy, whether few or many. The third: They did not fear poverty or lack from the world; they were confident that Allah would provide for them. The fourth: If a plague descended upon them, they would not flee, but remained until Allah decreed His command for them."

[Az-Zuhd by Ibn al-Mubārak: 480]

• From **Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 110 AH):

كَانَ فِي مَجْلِسٍ فَذُكِرَ أَصْحَابُ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ ﷺ فَقَالَ: إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا أَبَرَّ هَذِهِ الْأُمَّةِ قُلُوبًا، وَأَعْمَقَهَا عِلْمًا، وَأَقَلَّهَا تَكَلُّفًا، قَوْمٌ اخْتَارَهُمُ اللهُ عَزَّ جَلَّ لِصُحْبَةِ نَبِيِّهِ ، فَتَشَبَّهُوا بِأَخْلَاقِهِمْ وَطَرَائِقِهِمْ، فَإِنَّهُمْ وَرَبِّ الْكَعْبَةِ عَلَى الْهُدَى الْمُسْتَقِيمِ.

He was in a gathering, and the companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ were mentioned. So he said: "They were the most righteous of this Ummah in heart, the deepest in knowledge, and the least in affectation. They were a people whom Allah the Almighty chose for the companionship of His Prophet ﷺ, so emulate their character and their way, for by the Lord of the Kaʿbah, they were upon true guidance."

[Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm wa Faḍlihi, 2/947]

• **Ibrāhīm al-Nakhaʿī** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 96 AH) said:

لَمْ يُدَّخَرْ لَكُمْ شَيْءٌ خُبِّئَ عَنِ الْقَوْمِ لِفَضْلِ عِنْدَكُمْ.

"Nothing has been reserved for you that was hidden from those people which would give you superiority over them."

[Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm wa Faḍlihi, 2/946]

• He (may Allah have mercy on him) also said:

لقد أدركت أقواما لو لم يجاوز أحدهم ظفرا لما جاوزته، كفى إزراء على قوم أن تخالف أفعالهم.

"I have met people who, had one of them not gone beyond a fingernail's length, would not have gone beyond it. It is sufficient as a disgrace for a people that they contradict their (i.e companions) actions."

[Musnad al-Dārimī: 224]

• ʿAbdullāh ibn **Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

كنتُ بين يدي أبي (ت: ٢٤١) جالسا ذات يوم، فجاءت طائفة من الكرخيين فذكروا خلافة أبي بكر وخلافة عُمر بن الخطاب وخلافة عُثْمَان بن عَفَّانَ رَضِوَاللَّهُ عَنْهُم فأكثروا، وذكروا خلافة علي بن أبي طالب رضي اللهُ عَنْهُ وزادوا ، فطالوا، فرفع أبي رأسه إليهم فقال: يا هؤلاء قد أكثر تم القول في عَلِيّ والخلافة، على أن الخلافة لم تزين عليا بل علي زينها.

قَالَ السياري: فحدثت بهذا الحديث بعض الشيعة فقال لي: قد أخرجت نصف ما كان في قلبي عَلَى أَحْمَد بن حنبل من البغض.

"I was sitting one day in front of **my father** (d. 241 AH), when a group from the people of al-Karkh (i.e. from the Shi'ites) came and began speaking at length about the caliphate of Abū Bakr, the caliphate of ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, and the caliphate of ʿUthmān ibn ʿAffān (may Allah be pleased with them). They continued and mentioned the caliphate of ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib (may Allah be pleased with him), and went on at great length. So my father raised his head toward them and said: 'O people, you have spoken a lot about ʿAlī and the caliphate. But know that it was not the caliphate that adorned ʿAlī, rather, ʿAlī adorned the caliphate'."

Al-Sayyārī said: "I narrated this statement to some of the Shīʿah, and one of them said to me: 'You have removed half of what was in my heart of hatred toward Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal'."

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah, 2/16]

• Abū Ṭālib al-ʿUkkbarī said:

سألت أبا عبدالله رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ عَمَّن قَالَ: لَعَنَ اللهُ يزيد بن معاوية ؟ . فقال: لا تتكلم في هذا ، قَالَ النَّبِيُّ : "لعن المؤمن كقتله"، وقال: "خير الناس قرني ثم الذين يلونهم"، وقد كان يَزِيد فيهم، فأرى الإمساك أحب إلي.

"I asked **Abū ʿAbdullāh** (i.e., Imām Aḥmad, may Allah have mercy on him) about someone who says: 'May Allah curse Yazīd ibn Muʿāwiyah?' He replied: "Do not speak about this. The Prophet ﷺ said: 'Cursing a believer is like killing him.' And he also said: 'The best of people are my generation, then those who follow them.' Yazīd was among them. So I see that withholding (from speaking about him) is more beloved to me."

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah, 2/175]

• **Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal** (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

إنما عَلَى النَّاسِ إِتِّبَاعُ الآثار عَنْ رَسُولِ الله ، ومعرفة صحيحها من سقيمها ، ثُمَّ يَتَّبِعُها إذا لم يكن لها مُخالِف، ثُمَّ بعد ذلك قول أصحاب رسول الله ﷺ الأكابر ، وأئمة الهدى يُتَّبَعُونَ عَلَى مَا قَالُوا، وأصحاب النبي ﷺ كذلك لا يُخالفون، إذا لم يكن قول بعضهم لبعض مُخالِفًا، فَإِذَا اختلفوا نَظَر في الكتاب، بأي قولهم كَانَ أشبه بالكتاب أخذ به، أو كان أشبه بقول رسول الله ﷺ أخذ به، فإن لم يأْتِ عَنِ النَّبِيِّ ﷺ ولا عن أحد من أصحاب النبي ﷺ نَظَر في قول التابعين، فأي قولهم كان أشبه بالكتاب والسنة أخذ به، وتَرَكَ ما أحدث الناس بعدهم.

"It is only upon the people to follow the āthār (narrations) from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and to know the authentic from the weak among them, then to follow them if there is nothing that contradicts them. Then after that, [they follow] the statements of the senior Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and the Imams of guidance are followed upon what they said. And likewise the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ are not to be opposed, as long as the statement of some of them does not contradict others. But if they differ, he looks into the Book [of Allah]; whichever of their sayings is closer to the Book, he takes it, or whichever is closer to the statement of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, he takes it. If there is nothing from the Prophet ﷺ nor from any of the Companions of the Prophet ﷺ, then he looks into the statements of the Tābiʿīn; whichever of their statements is closer to the Book and the Sunnah, he takes it, and he leaves what the people innovated after them."[44]

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila 3/29]

• And he (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

إن الله جل ثناؤه وتقدست أسماؤه بعث محمدا نبيه بالهدى ودين الحق ليظهره على الدين كله ولو كره المشركون، وأنزلَ عَلَيْهِ كتابه الهدى والنور لمن اتبعه، وجعل رسوله الله الدال على معنى ما أراد من ظاهره وباطنه، وخاصه و عامه، وناسخه و منسوخه، وما قصد له الكتاب. فكان رسول الله ﷺ هُوَ المعبر عن كتاب الله الدال على معانيه، شاهَدَه في ذلك أصحابه، من ارتضاه الله لنبيه، واصطفاه لَهُ، ونقلوا ذَلِكَ عَنْهُ، فكانوا هم أعلم الناس برسول الله ﷺ، وبما أخبر عن معنى ما أراه الله من ذلك، بمشاهدتهم ما نصد له الكتاب، فكانوا هم المعبرين عن ذَلِكَ بعد رَسُول الله ﷺ.

[44] What was established by Imām Aḥmad (may Allah have mercy on him) is the same as what was established by all the scholars of ḥadīth. This correct and sound methodology was supported by the people of knowledge, such as Shaykh al-Islām Ibn Taymiyyah and his student Ibn al-Qayyim (may Allah have mercy on them both), and those who came after them until this day, and all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. Because of this, innovations (bidʿah) were absent among Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamāʿah, the followers of the righteous predecessors, in every time and place. They neither changed nor altered (the religion), and the religion has remained until this day pure, free from deviations, additions, and innovations.

"Indeed Allah, Glorious is His praise and Exalted are His Names, sent Muḥammad ﷺ, His Prophet, with guidance and the religion of truth, to make it prevail over all religion, even if the polytheists detest it. And He revealed upon him His Book, guidance and light for whoever follows it, and He made His Messenger the one who indicates the meaning of what He intended from its outward and inward aspects, its specific and general parts, its abrogating and abrogated rulings, and what the Book was sent down for. So the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was the one who interpreted the Book of Allah, pointing to its meanings. His Companions witnessed that, those whom Allah was pleased with for His Prophet and whom He chose for him, and they transmitted that from him. Thus, they were the most knowledgeable of people regarding the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, and regarding what he informed about the meaning of what Allah showed[45] him from that, due to their witnessing what the Book referred to. So they were the ones who interpreted that after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ."

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila 3/122]

- **Jābir ibn ʿAbd Allāh** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 78 AH), said:

ورسول الله ﷺ بين أظهرنا، عَلَيْهِ ينزل القرآن، وهو يعرف تأويله، وما عمل به من شيء عَمِلْنا. فَقَال قوم: بل نستعمل الظاهر، وتركوا الاستدلال برسول الله ﷺ، ولم يقبلوا أخبار أصحابه.

"The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was among us, the Qur'ān was being revealed upon him, and he knew its interpretation. Whatever he acted upon from it, we acted upon. Then some people said: 'Rather, we act upon the apparent (meaning),' and they abandoned seeking evidence through the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and did not accept the reports of his Companions."

Ibn ʿAbbās (may Allah be pleased with him) said in his address to the Khawārij:

أتيتكم من عند أصحاب رسول الله المهاجرين والأنصار، ومن عند ابن عم رسول الله ﷺ وصهره، وعليهم نزل القرآن، وهم أعلم بتأويله منكم، وليس فيكم منهم أحد.

"I have come to you from the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ , the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār, and from the cousin of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ and his son-in-law. The Qur'ān was revealed upon them, and they are more knowledgeable of its interpretation than you; and there is not a single one among you who is from them."

[45] And in some narrations from him: (intended – أرادَ) appears instead of (showed him – أراه). See I'lām al-Muwaqqi'īn (4/54).

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila 3/123]

• It is reported from ʿ**Abd al-ʿAzīz Ghulām al-Khallāl** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 363 AH):

وسأله رافضي عن قوله تعالى: {وَالَّذِي جَاءَ بِالصِّدْقِ وَصَدَّقَ بِهِ} [الزمر : ٣٣] من هُوَ ؟ فَقَالَ لَهُ: أَبو بكر الصديق، فرد عَلَيْهِ وَقَالَ: بل هو علي ابن أبي طالب، فهم به الأصحاب فَقَالَ: دعوه، ثُمَّ قَالَ: اقرأ ما بعدها : {لَهُم مَّا يَشَاءُونَ عِندَ رَبِّهِمْ ذَلِكَ جَزَاءُ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝ لِيُكَفِّرَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُمْ أَسْوَأَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا} [الزمر: ٣٤]، وهذا يقتضي أن يكون هَذَا المصدق ممن له إساءة سبقت، وعلى قولك أيها السائل لم يكن لعلي إساءة، فقطعه.

A Rāfiḍī (sectarian Shiʿī) asked him about the saying of Allah the Exalted: *{And the one who brought the truth and [those who] believed in it} [al-Zumar: 33]*, "Who is he?" So he replied to him: "Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq." The man responded: "Rather, it is ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib." The companions around him stirred against him, but [ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz] said: Leave him. Then he said: "Recite what follows it: *{They will have whatever they wish with their Lord. That is the reward of the doers of good. ۝ So that Allah may remove from them the worst of what they did...} [al-Zumar: 34-35]* This implies that the one who affirmed the truth (the muṣaddiq) is someone who had prior wrongdoing. And according to your claim, O questioner, ʿAlī had no wrongdoing." So he silenced him.

Ibn Abī Yaʿlā (may Allah have mercy on him) said commenting on it:

وهذا استنباط حَسَنٌ لا يعقله إلا العلماء، فَدَلَّ عَلَى علمه وحلمه وحسن خُلقه، فإنه لم يُقابله عَلَى جَفائه بجفاء، وعدل إلى العِلم .

This is a fine deduction (istinbāṭ ḥasan), which none but the scholars can comprehend. It indicates his knowledge, his forbearance, and his good character, for he did not respond to the man's rudeness with rudeness, but turned instead to knowledge.[46]

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābila 3/223–224]

[46] And this is the habit of the wise and intelligent, they respond to people's harshness with forbearance, and they answer ignorance with knowledge. In contrast, the unjust ones among rulers and those who are affiliated with knowledge respond with harshness toward anyone who disagrees with them, even if that person opposed them with manners and proof.

The meaning of the Shahada (testimony of faith), its virtue and importance, and the warning against what contradicts it[47]:

• **Shaddad ibn Aws** (may Allah be pleased with him) (d. 60 AH) said:

أخوف ما أخاف عليكم الشرك والشهوة الخفية. قيل له: بعد الإسلام تخاف علينا الشرك؟. قال: ما من الشرك إلا أن تجعل مع الله إلها آخر؟

"The thing I fear most for you is shirk (associating partners with Allah) and hidden desires." He was asked: "After Islam, you fear shirk for us?" He replied: "Is there nothing from Shirk except making another God alongside Allah?"[48]

[Az-Zuhd by Abu Dawud, 306]

• It was said to **Wahb ibn Munabbih** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 114 AH):

أليس مفتاح الجنة لا إله إلا الله ؟ قال: بلى ولكن ليس من مفتاح إلا وله أسنان من أتى الباب بأسنانه فتح له، ومن لم يأت الباب بأسنانه لم يفتح له.

"Is not the key to Paradise 'La ilaha illa Allah' (There is no god but Allah)?" He replied: "Yes, but every key has teeth. If you come with a key that has the proper teeth, the door will open for you; but if you do not, it will not open."

[Tahdhib al-Hilyah, 2/50]

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[47] Ibn Rajab (may Allah have mercy on him) said: "If a servant perfects his Tawheed (monotheism) and sincerity to Allah in it, and fulfills all its conditions with his heart, tongue, and limbs, or at least with his heart and tongue at the time of death, this necessitates the forgiveness of all his past sins, and prevents him entirely from entering the Fire. Whoever realizes the true meaning of the word of Tawheed in his heart, it expels from his heart everything besides Allah in terms of love, veneration, glorification, awe, fear, hope, and reliance. At that point, his sins and misdeeds are burned away, even if they were as much as the foam of the sea. And sometimes they are even converted into good deeds, as has been mentioned previously regarding the replacement of bad deeds with good ones. For this Tawheed is the greatest elixir, if a single particle of it were placed upon mountains of sins and misdeeds, it would transform them into good deeds." [Jāmiʿ al-ʿUlūm wa al-Ḥikam, p. 523].

[48] Meaning: Shirk (associating partners with Allah) is not limited to setting up another god alongside Allah. Rather, it is broader and more comprehensive. A person may fall into shirk even while praying and prostrating to Allah—such as one who seeks help from the dead, or uses them as intermediaries, or one who loves someone with a love equal to that of Allah, or fears someone as he fears Allah.

• **Sufyān ibn ʿUyaynah** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 198 AH) said:

ما أنعم الله عزوجل على العباد نعمة أفضل من أن عرفهم لا إله إلا الله، وإن لا إله إلا الله لهم في الآخرة كالماء في الدنيا.

"There is no blessing that Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, has bestowed upon His servants greater than that He made them know 'Lā ilāha illā Allāh' (There is no god but Allah). And indeed, 'Lā ilāha illā Allāh' will be for them in the Hereafter like water is in this world."

[Ibn Abī al-Dunyā, 1/494]

Al-walā' wal-barā':

• Narrated by Abu Musa al-Ash'ari (may Allah be pleased with him):

قلت لعمر رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ (ت: ٢٣): إن لي كاتبا نصرانيا، قال: مالك؟ ، أما سمعت الله يقول: {يَٰٓأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَرَىٰٓ أَوْلِيَآءَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَآءُ بَعْضٍ} [المائدة: ٥١] ألا اتخذت حنيفا؟ قال: قلت: يا أمير المؤمنين، لي كتابته وله دينه، قال: لا أكرمهم إذ أهانهم الله، ولا أعزهم إذ أذلهم الله، ولا أُدنيهم إذ أقصاهم الله.

I said to ʿ**Umar** (may Allah be pleased with him) [d. 23 AH]: "I have a Christian scribe." He said: "What's wrong with you? Haven't you heard Allah say: *{O you who believe, do not take the Jews and the Christians as allies; they are allies of one another} [al-Mā'idah: 51]*?" Why didn't you take a monotheist (ḥanīf) instead?" I said: "O Commander of the Faithful, for me is his writing, and for him is his religion." ʿUmar replied: "I do not honor them when Allah has humiliated them, nor do I give them dignity when Allah has disgraced them, nor do I bring them close when Allah has cast them far."[49]

[Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim, 84-85]

• It is reported about Imam al-Shāfiʿī (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 204 AH):

عَابَ بَعْضُ النَّاسِ عَلَيه؛ لِفَرْطِ مَيْلِهِ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْبَيْتِ، وَشِدَّةِ مَحَبَّتِهِ لَهُمْ، إِلَى أَنْ نَسَبَهُ إِلَى الرَّفْضِ، فَأَنْشَأَ الإِمَامُ الشَّافِعِيُّ فِي ذَلِكَ يَقُولُ:

إِنْ كَانَ رَفْضًا حُبُّ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ، فَلْيَشْهَدِ الثَّقَلَانِ أَنِّي رَافِضِي.

Some people criticized him for his strong inclination toward the Ahl al-Bayt (the family of the Prophet ﷺ), and his intense love for them, to the point that they accused him of being a Rāfiḍī. In response, Imam al-Shāfiʿī composed the following poem couplet:

"If loving the family of Muhammad is Rafd, then let both mankind and jinn bear witness that I am a Rāfiḍī."

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah 3/134]

• **Abu al-Fawaris Shah Allah ibn Shuja' Al-Kirmani** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 270 AH) said:

[49] Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said: It was narrated by Imam Ahmad with an authentic chain.

مَنْ عَرَفَ رَبَّهُ طَمِعَ فِي عَفْوِهِ، وَرَجَا فَضْلَهُ، وَقَالَ : الْفُتُوَّةُ مِنْ طِبَاعِ الْأَحْرَارِ، وَاللُّؤْمُ مِنْ شِيَمِ الْأَنْذَالِ، وَمَا تَعَبَّدَ مُتَعَبِّدٌ بِأَكْثَرَ مِنَ التَّحَبُّبِ إِلَى أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ بِمَا يُحِبُّونَ؛ لِأَنَّ مَحَبَّةَ أَوْلِيَاءِ اللَّهِ دَلِيلٌ عَلَى مَحَبَّةِ اللهِ.

“Whoever knows his Lord longs for His pardon and hopes for His grace. Chivalry is from the traits of the free, and vileness is from the characteristics of the lowly. No worshipper has worshipped with anything greater than endearing himself to the Awliya’ of Allah through what they love, for loving the Awliya’of Allah is a sign of loving Allah.”

[Tahdhīb al-Ḥilyah 3/359]

Condemning swearing by other than Allah:

• **Jabalah ibn Suhaym** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 125 AH) said:

أَقْبَلْتُ مَعَ زِيَادِ بْنِ حُدَيْرٍ الْأَسَدِيُّ رَحِمَ اللَّهُ: مِنَ الْكُنَاسَةِ ، فَقُلْتُ فِي كَلَامِي: لَا وَالْأَمَانَةِ، فَجَعَلَ زِيَادٌ يَبْكِي وَيَبْكِي ، فَظَنَنْتُ أَنِّي أَتَيْتُ أَمْرًا عَظِيمًا، فَقُلْتُ لَهُ: أَكَانَ يُكْرَهُ هَذَا؟ قَالَ: نَعَمْ، كَانَ يُنْهَى عَنِ الْحَلِفِ بِالْأَمَانَةِ أَشَدَّ النَّهْيِ.

"I was coming from Al-Kunāsah[50] with Ziyād ibn Hudayr al-Asadī (may Allah have mercy on him) and in my speech, I said, 'No, by Al-Amānah (the trust)!' Ziyād began to weep and weep, so I thought I had done something grave. I asked him, 'Was this disliked?' He replied, 'Yes, we were most severely prohibited from swearing by Al-Amānah'."

[Ibn Abi al-Dunyā, 7/339]

[50] Al-Kunāsah: A place where dirt, filth and what is swept from homes is thrown.

The fundamentals of Sunnah in brief:

• **Imam Mālik** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 179 AH) said:

الإيمان قول وعمل، يزيد وينقص، وبعضه أفضل من بعض، والله في السماء وعلمه في كل مكان. وقال: القرآن كلام الله ، وكلام الله من الله، وليس من الله شيء مخلوق، ومن قال: القرآن مخلوق فهو كافر، والذي يقف أشدّ منه ، يستتاب وإلا ضربت عنقه.

"Faith (Īmān) is speech and action, it increases and decreases, and some of it is superior to others. Allah is above the heavens, and His knowledge encompasses all places." And he said, "The Qur'an is the speech of Allah, and the speech of Allah is from Him; nothing from Him is created. Whoever says the Qur'an is created is a disbeliever (kāfir), and the one who remains silent (on this matter) is even worse. He should be asked to repent; if he refuses, his neck should be struck (i.e., executed)."

[Tartīb al-Madārik, 1/165]

• **Imām Aḥmad ibn Ḥanbal** (may Allah have mercy on him) (d. 241 AH), the leader of Ahl al-Sunnah and the patient one during the Mihna, said:

أجمع تسعون رجلا من التابعين وأئمة المسلمين وأئمة السلف وفقهاء الأمصار، على أن السنة التي توفي عنها رَسُولِ اللهِ ﷺ.

"Ninety men from the Tābiʿīn (successors of the Companions), the leaders of the Muslims, the imāms of the Salaf, and the scholars of the regions unanimously agreed upon the Sunnah upon which the Messenger of Allah ﷺ passed away:

أولها الرضا بقضاء الله عزوجل، والتسليم لأمره، والصبر على حكمه.

First of which is Accepting Allah's decree, submitting to His command, and being patient with His judgment.

والأخذ بما أمر الله به والانتهاء عما نهى الله عنه.

Holding firm to what Allah has commanded and abstaining from what He has forbidden.

والإيمان بالقدر خيره وشره.

Belief in divine decree (Qadar), its good and evil.

وترك المراء والجدال في الدين.

Abandoning argumentation and disputes in religion.

والمسح على الخفين.

[Validity of] Wiping over the leather socks.

والجهاد مع كل خليفة بر وفاجر.

Jihād under every ruler, whether righteous or wicked.

والصلاة عَلَى مَن مات من أهل القبلة.

Praying for those who die from Ahl al-Qiblah (Muslims).

والإيمان قول وعمل يزيد بالطاعة وينقص بالمعصية.

Īmān (faith) is speech and action—it increases with obedience and decreases with sin.

والقرآن كلام الله منزل عَلَى قلب نبيه مُحَمَّد ﷺ غير مخلوق، من حيثما تلي.

The Qur'an is the speech of Allah, revealed upon the heart of His Prophet Muḥammad ﷺ—it is not created, no matter where it is recited.

والصبر تحت لواء السلطان على ما كان فيه من عدل أو جور، وأن لا نخرج على الأمراء بالسيف وإن جاروا.

Patience under the banner of the ruler, whether he is just or oppressive, and not revolting against leaders with the sword, even if they are unjust.

وأن لا نكفر أحدا من أهل التوحيد وإن عملوا الكبائر.

Not declaring anyone from the people of Tawhid a disbeliever, even if they commit major sins.

والكف عما شجر بين أصحاب رَسُول الله ﷺ.

Restraining from delving into the conflicts that occurred among the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ.

وأفضل الناس بعد رسول الله ﷺ أبو بكر وعمر وعثمان وعلي ابن عم رسول الله.

The best people after the Messenger of Allah ﷺ are Abū Bakr, ʿUmar, ʿUthmān, and ʿAlī, the son of the uncle of the Messenger of Allah.

والترحم على جميع أصحاب رَسُول الله ﷺ وعلى أولاده وأزواجه وأصهاره رضوان الله عليهم أجمعين.

Seeking mercy for all the Companions of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ, his children, wives, and in-laws—may Allah be pleased with them all.

فهذه السنة الزموها تسلموا ، أخذها هدى وتركها ضلالة.

This is the Sunnah, adhere to it and you will be safe. Taking it is guidance, and abandoning it is misguidance."

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah, 1/349-350]

• **He** (may Allah have mercy on him) also said:

صفة المؤمن من أهل السنة والجماعة:

The characteristics of a believer from Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah are:

من يشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأن محمدا عبده ورسوله.

He bears witness that there is no god but Allah, alone without partner, and that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

وأقر بجميع ما أتت به الأنبياء والرسل.

He affirms all that the prophets and messengers came with.

وعقد عليه على ما أظهر، ولم يشك في إيمانه.

He holds firm to what is apparent, and does not doubt his faith (iman).

ولم يكفر أحدًا من أهل التوحيد بذنب، وأرجأ ما غاب عنه من الأمور إلى الله عَزَّوَجَل، وفوض أمره إلى الله عَزَّوَجَل، ولم يقطع بالذنوب العصمة من عند الله .

He does not declare anyone from the people of tawḥīd (monotheism) to be a disbeliever due to a sin, he refers the unseen matters to Allah, the Majestic, the Exalted, and entrusts the affairs to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, and he does not assert that sins remove protection (i.e. protection from eternal punishment) granted by Allah.

وعلم أن كل شيء بقضاء الله وقدره، والخير والشر جميعا.

He knows that all things are by the decree and will of Allah—both good and evil.

ورجا لمحسن أمة محمد ﷺ، وتخوف على مسيئهم.

He hopes for reward for the righteous among the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ, and fears for the sinful among them.

ولم ينزل أحدًا من أمة مُحَمَّد جنة ولا نارًا ، بإحسان اكتسبه ولا بذنب اكتسبه، حتى يكون الله عزوجل الذي ينزل خلقه حيث يشاء.

He does not declare anyone from the Ummah of Muhammad ﷺ to be definitively in Paradise or Hell based solely on a good deed they performed or a sin they committed, until Allah the Almighty, who assigns His creation to wherever He wills, decides their fate.

وعَرَفَ حق السلف الذين اختارهم الله لصحبة نبيه.

He acknowledges the virtue of the righteous predecessors whom Allah chose to accompany His Prophet ﷺ.

وقدم أبا بكر وعمر وعثمان وعرف حق علي بن أبي طالب، وطلحة، والزبير، وعبد الرحمن بن عوف، وسعد بن أبي وقاص، وسعيد بن زيد بن عَمْرِو بن نفيل عَلَى سائر الصحابة؛ فإن هؤلاء التسعة الذين كانوا مع النبي ﷺ على جبل حراء، فقَالَ النَّبِيُّ : "اسكن حراء فما عليك إلا نبي أو صديق أو شهيد"، والنبي ﷺ عاشرهم.

He gives precedence to Abu Bakr, then ‘Umar, then ‘Uthmān, and recognizes the status of ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, as well as Ṭalḥah, al-Zubayr, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn ‘Awf, Sa‘d ibn Abī Waqqāṣ, and Sa‘īd ibn Zayd ibn ‘Amr ibn Nufayl over the rest of the Companions. These are the nine who were with the Prophet ﷺ on Mount Ḥirā’, and the Prophet ﷺ said: “Be still, Ḥirā’, for none is upon you but a prophet, a ṣiddīq (truthful one), or a martyr.” And the Prophet ﷺ was the tenth among them.

وترحم على جميع أصحاب مُحَمَّدٍ، صغيرهم وكبيرهم، وحدث بفضائلهم، وأَمْسَكَ عَمَّا شَجَر بينهم.

He asks Allah’s mercy for all the Companions of Muhammad ﷺ, the young and the old, and relates their virtues. He refrains from delving into the disputes that occurred between them.

وصلاة العيدين والخوف والجمعة والجماعات مع كل أمير بر أو فاجر.

He prays the ‘Eid, fear, Jumu‘ah, and congregational prayers behind any ruler—whether righteous or corrupt.

والمسح على الخفين في السفر والحضر. والقصر في السفر.

He wipes over the leather socks (khuffayn) whether in travel or at home, and shortens prayers during travel.

والقرآن كلام الله وتنزيله، وليس بمخلوق.

The Qur’an is the speech of Allah, His revelation—it is not created.

والإيمان قول وعمل، يزيد وينقص.

Faith (īmān) consists of belief, speech, and action; it increases and decreases.

والجهاد ماض منذ بعث الله محمدا ﷺ إلى آخر عصبة يقاتلون الدجال، لا يضرهم جور جائر.

Jihād continues from the time Allah sent Muhammad ﷺ until the last group fights the Dajjāl. The tyranny of a tyrant will not harm them.

والشراء والبيع حلال إلى يوم القيامة، على حكم الكتاب والسنة.

Buying and selling are permissible until the Day of Judgment, based on the rulings of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

والتكبير على الجنائز أربعًا.

Takbīr (saying Allahu Akbar) over the funeral (janāzah) [prayer] is done four times.

والدعاء لأئمة المسلمين بالصلاح، ولا تخرج عليهم بسيفك.

He prays for the rectification of Muslim leaders and does not rebel against them with the sword.

ولا تقاتل في فتنة، والزم بيتك.

And do not fight in times of fitnah (tribulation) and stay in your home.

والإيمان بعذاب القبر، والإيمان بمنكر ونكير، والإيمان بالحوض، والشفاعة.

Belief in the punishment of the grave, belief in the questioning by Munkar and Nakīr, belief in the ḥawḍ (the Prophet's pond), and intercession.

والإيمان أن أهل الجنة يرون ربهم تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى.

Belief that the people of Paradise will see their Lord, Blessed and Exalted.

والإيمان أن الموحدين يخرجون من النار بعد ما امتحشوا، كما جاءت الأحاديث في هذه الأشياء عَنِ النَّبِيِّ، نؤمن بتصديقها ولا نضرب لها الأمثال.

Belief that the monotheists (muwaḥḥidūn) will be taken out of Hell after they are punished, just as the hadiths from the Prophet ﷺ have reported regarding these matters. We believe in them and affirm them without making analogy.

هذا ما اجتمع عليه العلماء في جميع الآفاق.

This is what scholars from all regions have agreed upon.

[Ṭabaqāt al-Ḥanābilah (2/293-295)]